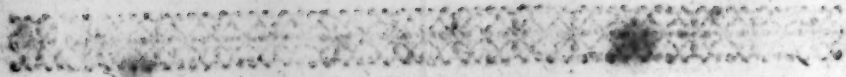


THE
FALL
OF THE
Earl of ESSEX.

By James Ralph Esq.^r





THE

FALL

OF THE

Earl of ESSEX.



THE
Dramatis Personæ.
F A L L

OF THE
Earl of ESSEX.

As it is Perform'd at the

T H E A T R E

I N
Goodman's-Fields.

Alter'd from the Unhappy Favourite of
Mr. BANKS.

The Earl of Essex is a Tragedy in which there is not one good Line, and yet was never seen without drawing Tears from some part of the Audience; for the Incidents of this Drama are laid together so happily, that the Spectator makes the Play for himself by the Force the Circumstance has upon his Imagination; it is impossible, for one unprejudiced, to see it untouched with pity.

TATLER, N^o. 14. On Mr. Banks's Earl of Essex.

L O N D O N :

Printed for W. MEADOWS, at the *Angel* in Cornhill, and S. BILLINGSLEY, at the *Judge's-Head*, in Chancery-lane. 1731. [Pr. 1s. 6d.]

Dramatis Personæ.

M E N.

Earl of <i>Essex</i> ,	Mr. <i>Giffard</i> .
Earl of <i>Southampton</i> ,	Mr. <i>Rosco</i> .
Lord <i>Burleigh</i> ,	Mr. <i>Wm. Giffard</i> .
Sir <i>Walter Raleigh</i> ,	Mr. <i>Bardin</i> .

W O M E N.

Queen <i>Elizabeth</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Haughton</i> .
Lady <i>Essex</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Giffard</i> .
Lady <i>Nottingham</i> ,	Mrs. <i>Morgan</i> .

N. B. *The Passages distinguish'd by Commas in the Margin, are left out in the Representation, because of the Length of the Play.*



PROLOGUE.

Spoken by Mr. GIFFARD.

JUSTLY afraid to dare the Critick's Rage,
Or wake to Censure so severe an Age,
Our humble Author quits an Author's Pride,
And lays his own imperfect Schemes aside;
Invokes the Genius of the Bards of Old,
To change his Tinsel into solid Gold:
Their's was the Secret, and at their Command
The Mine shall kindle in a barren Land;
Their magick Touch disclose the secret Vein,
And stamp their Image on the Ore again.

The Tragick Tale that now demands our Tears,
Has charm'd Attention for a Length of Years:
A Master-Pencil sketch'd the bold Design,
And mark'd the Passions strong in ev'ry Line.
Here Love and Sorrow stung the mourning Maid,
Here Anger threaten'd, and here Fraud betray'd;
In every Change he lavish'd all his Art,
And ev'ry Change commanded ev'ry Heart.
--- But, Grief to tell, what Painting should express,
The Life of Beauty, and the Pomp of Dress;
With wild, with careless Hand he ill supply'd,
The Painting languish'd, and the Beauty dy'd:
A Mass of random Colours rudely laid,
Almost deform'd the noble Sketch he made.
--- In Fondness then for such a fav'rite Tale,
In Hope th' Endeavour will in Part prevail,

This

PROLOGUE

*This Grace a modern Bard attempts to give,
And like the Outline make the Colours live.
The Rest is yours--Success is always Fame,
And sure Success is due to Essex' Name:
Inur'd to Praise, he charm'd for half an Age,
The darling Heroe of the British Stage.
Still let his Virtue merit your Applause,
Still let your Sorrows flow in Virtue's Cause:
With genial Warmth revive the blasted Bays,
'Tis just to censure, but 'tis kind to praise.*



EPI-



EPILOGUE.

Spoken by Mrs. GIFFARD.

THank my kind Stars, this serious Farce is over,
And I'm no more a whining Tragick Lover:
A Woman's Tears are downright Affectation,
A silly Complaisance to idle Fashion.
For to speak freely now-a-days indeed,
A Widow's Sorrow is a Widow's Weed;
We're grown sincere, and almost scorn to feign
A lying Grief --- because the Lye were vain.
Our Pagan Sparks would scruple to believe us,
And our own Wiles of other Dears deceive us:
--- Nature and Art will sometimes strive together,
Like Rain and Sunshine, April's wanton Weather.
But when we truly mourn, 'tis in the Fear
Of lying Single a whole tedious Year;
Or if provided with a Spouse again,
The Pleasure might not balance half the Pain.
--- The Play-house Motto, as your Scholars say,
Would sily teach us all the World's a Play:
That Lords and Ladies, Statesmen, Merchants, Squires,
Act but what Pleasure, or what Gain requires;
That all alike aim only to deceive,
And what the Knaves impose, the Fools believe.
--- A Wife in Tears is Falshood in Disguise,
And Joy dissembles in a Widow's Eyes;

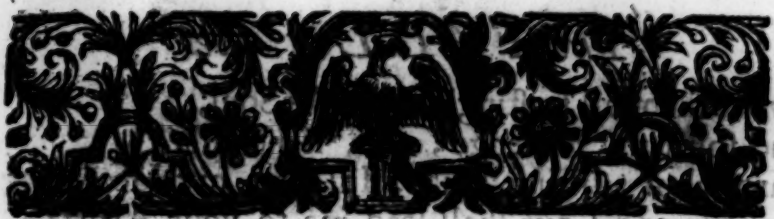
An

EPILOGUE.

*An artful Beauty is the Filt in Vogue,
And modish Lewdness Folly's Epilogue!
— An Epilogue! Dear me, that's à propos:
With some such Errand I was sent to you;
But if you hope to hear some ticklish Joak,
Our Author's Meaning will be quite mistook,
He aims to please, but ne'er could yet suppose,
That Fame can flourish where Dishonour grows:
More courtly Tastes may overlook Decorum,
And shout when Vice is imag'd plain before 'em.
Our bashful Bard would blush at such Applause,
And to your Virtue only trusts his Cause:
Your Virtue then must combat half the Nation,
And His atone for such Contempt of Fashion.*



THE



THE F A L OF THE Earl of ESSEX.

ACT I. SCENE I.

NOTTINGHAM *sola reading a Letter.*

CONFUSION! am I then despis'd? are all
My Charms rejected, and my Love re-
[fus'd?
Perdition on his Soul! Oh! I could rave,
Like howling Phrensy, and out-curse Re-
I'm now the Scandal of my Sex; my Name [venge:
Will be no more ador'd, my Beauty prais'd,
My Virtue honour'd, or my Form desir'd. ----

Enter Burleigh

O Cecil help me to unload my Soul,
And give a Loose to Rage; or, mad with Pain,
I shall forego the Light of Heav'n, avoid
Mankind, and curse my self, and them for ever.

Bur. What means my Charmer? whence proceeds
[the Rage
That fires your Cheek, and ruffles all your Form?
----But, whatso'er's the Cause, if *Burleigh's* Head,
Or Heart, or Hand, can serve you, they're your own.
Nott. Then think of Ruin, Blood, and all the Plagues
That heighten ev'n the Agonies of Death,

I want them all to sting him to the Soul,
And spirit my Revenge; and, if he falls
Thro' your assisting Wiles, I'll turn my Heart
To you, and Love shall lead me to your Arms.

Bur. And will you bless me with a Lover's Warmth?
Shall I at last be happy in your Arms?
Delightful Prospect! who must be destroy'd
To merit such a Grace? No dread of Guilt
Shall fright me from the Deed, no Thought, no Sense
Of foolish Pity frustrate my Resolves.

Nott. There spoke my better Angel; now my Heart
Lie quiet in my Breast, and ach no more
With doubting thy Revenge: 'Tis sure, 'tis seal'd;
Fortune's the Slave that waits on your Command:
Give me Revenge, and I am yours forever.

Bur. Oh Heaven! what sounds of Happiness are these!
Why this is Life indeed; my Bloom of Youth
Could never boast so strong a Rapture, such
A Blaze of Joy!

Nott. ----But swear, this Instant, swear
By Heav'n's all-ruling Majesty that Hope
Or Fear shall vainly tempt you to disclose
The Secrets I reveal; nor Fate, nor Time
Efface the racking Mem'ry of my Wrongs,
'Till weighty Vengeance seize the guilty Cause,
And hurl him to Damnation unprepar'd,
And thoughtless of his End.

Bur. ——— By all the Pow'rs
Of Heav'n I swear devoutly to revenge
The Wrongs you suffer, and with truest Heart,
Conceal the Secrets you disclose.---Yet more,
There's not a Lord so great in *England's* Realm
Who dares to injure you, but dies; he dies
Immediate, without Ransom dies, tho' ev'n
Proud *Essex* were the Man. ———

Nott. ——— Perish his Name,
'Tis he, 'tis he's the Torment of my Life,
The Curse of ev'ry plaintive Hour! Good Heaven!
Have I been only flatter'd in the Thought
Of Beauty, and of Charms? Or are they grown, All

All pale and wither'd, like a faded Flower
In wintry Gales? --- Look *Cecil*, has my Cheek
Lost all its Bloom, my Eyes forgot to Shine?
Sit Age and Time in Triumph on my Brow
Destroying ev'ry Grace; that this proud Man
Should dare to scorn my Love, and with Disdain
Reject my profer'd Vows!-----

Bur. How long my jealous Soul has trac'd the Marks
Of this unlucky Flame? How long bewail'd
My disappointed Vows, and in the Rage,
Of luckless Passion, murmur'd at my Fate!

Nott. Enough good *Cecil*! Spare my farther Shame,
Nor let the Air be burthen'd with the Sound
Of my Reproach.--- O may the busy World
Ne'er feast its Malice with th' ungrateful Tale.
---But you must hear the Series of my Wrongs,
And, since your wiser Heart is touch'd like mine,
Pity my Sorrows, and excuse my Rage.
Prompted by Love, and threaten'd with Despair,
O let my Blushes be for ever hid!
With moving Lines I su'd this haughty Man,
Discharg'd the Mournings of my love-sick Soul,
And told him all my Pain.

Bur. ----- Curs'd, cruel Fate!
Oh, had such Blessings been my happier Lot,
With what a Joy I'd hasted to your Arms,
And in a Moment, lov'd my Soul away.
---Forgive, my Charmer! the impatient Zeal,
That rages in my Breast, and interrupts
With fruitless Mournings the unfinish'd Tale.

Nott. O that my Soul had utter'd all her Woes!
And that no future Sound could urge its Way
To my Disgrace! ---But hear---Th' ungrateful Wretch,
Grown Cold and Lifeless to the Call of Love,
Return'd; I can no more---Here read my Shame.

[Offering him the Letter.

Yet hold---no Mortal ever shall survey
The dire Affront or Glory in my Pain;

The FALL of the

No, let Oblivion blind the Eye of Time,
And deaf the Ear of Fame --- Let Scandal thus
Be cheated of her Tale, -- thus Vengeance seize ? *Tearing it*
The curs'd Occasion of such Rage as mine. *furiously.*

Bur. Forbear your Rage, and study for Revenge.

Nott. My Rage! no *Burleigh*, 'tis the Wing of Rage
Shall Mount me to Revenge. In vain the Wretch
Shall cour beneath the Throne, and court the Shield
Of Sovereign Pow'r in vain.

Bur. ————— While Majesty
Descends in humble State to be his Guard,
What subtle Scheme of Vengeance can succeed?
Let but kind Fortune force him from her Arms,
And like a Cloud he vanishes to Air;
For Treason claims his Life, and *England's* Laws
Shall give a Legal Doom.

Nott. ————— A Legal Doom!
And Treason claims his Life! name it again
Good *Cecil*! and my Heart, charm'd with the Sound,
Shall echoe to thy Voice, Justly my Hopes,
Were founded on your Aid, your Word is Pow'r,
Your Will Success, and Wisdom all your Schemes.

Bur. O hold--you torture me with Praise, my Heart
Beats high with too intense Delight, you charm
My troubled Senses with a Wild of Joy,
And heighten Pleasure into Pain. --- But say,
Thou dear Enchantress of my Thoughts, say how
The doating Queen may be induc'd to leave
Her vaunted Minion to the Frown of Fate:
Speak thou the Means, for thou canst wind her Soul
And work her to thy Will: In thee she trusts,
Pours out the inmost Weakness of her Mind
To thee, and Dreams the babling World deceiv'd.

Nott. Then to your Wish attend ---- Young *Rutland*
On this Seducer's Charms, and is, I fear [doats
The secret Cause of his Disdain to me.
---- But Death shall wait upon the nuptial Bed,
And *Rutland* mourn like me her blasted Joy.

For,

For, should the Queen continue his Defence,
I'd fire her Soul with Jealousy and Rage
Like mine, and then the guilty Traytor dies.

Bur. Wisely resolv'd; Success shall crown the Cause,
But see! *Southampton* comes, whose stubborn Love
For haughty *Essex* will retard the Deed,
Unless Destruction wait upon them both-----
Retire my Fair, and, certain of Revenge,
Indulge your Soul, and give a Loose to Joy.

[Exit. Nottingham.]

Enter Southampton.

South. My Lord, 'tis rumour'd in the Breath of Fame,
That you, like Falshood in a Saint's Disguise,
Have brib'd some factious Commons to conspire
The Fall of *Essex*, and disgrace the Man
That *England* honours as her chosen Son.

Bur. 'Tis true, my Lord, the Commons have de-
To charge your Friend with treasonable Deeds, [sign'd
But if you hear that they're inflam'd by me,
'Tis false. Alas! my Business in the State,
Employs my Thoughts alone, nor find I Time,
To cavil with the Faults of other Men.
---Yet they're the Friends of their dear Country's Cause
Who dare accuse this Heroe to the World.

South. Accuse him to the World! of what? what
Have soil'd his Honour with the least Reproach? [Crimes
---But publick Good must ever be the Plea
For Villains to betray their Country's Cause,
And force its Champions to an early Grave.

Bur. My Lord, you throw a Scandal on the Queen,
And wrong her Council with the Breath of Falshood;
For *Ireland* suffers deeply by his Crimes,
And groans incessant for Revenge.

South. _____ 'Tis all
The hellish Fiction of a Statesman's Brain:
Cecil's the Fiend that conjures up this Storm,

And 'tis a Victim to your Thirst of Rule
He falls, but falls not unreveng'd.

Bur. ———— My Lord,
Your Zeal is Madness now ---- not unreveng'd
He falls ---- whose Shade must follow to attend
The gloomy Heroe to the Realms of Night?
Will brave *Southampton* die upon his Hearse?
Or must old *Burleigh* follow for Revenge?
Come, come, my Lord, forbear this fruitless Rage,
Left swift-wing'd Justice, with a single Blow,
Dismiss you both as guilty from the World. ----

South. O hold my Heart! what shall the Villain brave
Me to my Face, and stigmatize my Friend,
Yet pass with Triumph unchastis'd away?
Thou Foe to Virtue! Traytor to Mankind!
Dar'st thou then threaten to extend thy Snares,
And glory in thy Guilt! now, by the Hopes
Of my Eternal Soul, did Majesty [*half drawing his Sword.*
Not give a Sanction to this Place, thy Life
Should pay th' immediate Forfeit of thy Crimes.
---- But 'twould ingrave Dishonour on my Sword,
And lift thee up to Fame; thy Baseness guard
Thee from thy Fate.

Bur. ———— Thank you my noble Lord,
See I can bear with Patience your Affronts,
And Smile to see you Rage.

South. ———— 'Tis then because
Thy guilty Soul is shaken with its Fears,
And is too much a Coward to affect
The generous Fury it can never know.

Bur. No 'tis not Fear, but Innocence that cools
My temperate Blood; yet let *Southampton's* Rage
Secure his *Effex's* Safety and his own.

South. My own's submitted to the Will of Fate;
But if the Great, the Godlike *Effex* must expire
As Treason councils, and as Fraud betrays,
May Heav'n assert its Title to Revenge,
And make thee wretched as thy Crimes deserve.

Back Scene drawing, Discovers the Queen as in Council. Nottingham, Rutland, Lords, Guards, and Attendants.

Queen. What now my Lords! what Insolence is this!
To let your noisy Quarrels reach our Ears,
And interrupt the Councils of the State:
What must we wait the Issue of your Broils
Before the Nation's Business can proceed?

Bur. Pardon, most Gracious Queen! *Southampton's*
Occasion'd mine — [Fault

Queen. ——— Silence, my Lord, I'm deaf
To such Complaints; be reconcil'd a-new
And jointly bear the Burthien of the State,
In Peace and Love—Now speak what News from *Spain*.

Bur. None, glorious Princess, none that can alarm
Our Fears afresh, or make your Subjects dread
A new Descent; for haughty *Spain* yet mourns
The Ruin of her Fleets, nor dares again
Attempt the Rage of War. ———

Queen. ——— Enough; my Heart
Exults in the Remembrance of that Day,
When, big with Pride, they brav'd the frighted Shores,
And thunder'd Death and Ruin o'er the Land;
Till Heav'n declar'd for us, and valiant *Drake*
Dispers'd their broken Squadrons o'er the Main:
Whence *England* rests secure from foreign Lords,
And Peace and Plenty are again our own.
Oh that late Times might celebrate the Day,
And all its smiling Hours devote to Joy!

South. Let future Ages celebrate the Day,
And all its smiling Hours devote to Joy. —
But let not *Drake* alone, most gracious Queen,
Engross your Praise, when *Essex* claims his Share,
And pleads an equal Title to the Grace:

Essex the foremost Hero of the Globe!

Essex who rais'd such Trophies to your Fame,

That Time shall vainly labour to efface
Th' eternal Monument.

Queen. ——— 'Tis true, my Lord,
That *Essex* has deserv'd the noblest Praise;
But his late Actions, with an envious Cloud,
Have veil'd his former Fame:--- Yet he is brave
And haply e're this Time has earn'd anew
The wonted Glories that adorn'd his Name.

---What News, Lord *Cecil*, from the *Irish* Coast?

Bur. None good---Expresses every Hour arrive
Confirming ev'n the worst we could have fear'd.

Queen. What is't you mean? ———

Bur. ——— How soon your Grace o'erlooks
A Fav'rite's Guilt!

Queen. ——— A Fav'rite's Guilt!

Bur. ——— Yes He,
Your *Essex* who betray'd his Charge,---forgot
The use of Arms, commens'd a Truce against
Your absolute Command; who parley'd oft,
In secret, with the Rebel Chief, ev'n like
A Monarch exercis'd his Pow'r in Peace,
But like a beaten Coward in the Field----

Queen. *Cecil* forbear! you grow malicious now;
'Tis time to curb the Freedom of your Speech;
What must an Age of Service be forgot
For one imprudent Deed? if so there's none
Could long escape, no not ev'n *Burleigh's* self
Tho' eager to condemn a nobler Man,
---Yet I've reprov'd him for his Faults, and sent
The strictest Orders that he keep the Field,
Till he has conquer'd the Remains of War.
And Fury slumber on the Breast of Peace.

South. A nobler Man by Heaven! and when he falls
His loss shall long be mourn'd, when Statesmen, fill'd
With Craft and Pride, by Hundreds in the Grave
Shall rot unheeded to their native Dust.

Bur. Madam I urge no more, ---for *Rawleigh* comes,
Deputed

Deputed by the Commons to intreat
Your Royal Goodness to confirm their Laws.

*Enter Sir Walter Raleigh, and others of the House
of Commons.*

Queen. Welcome my People, welcome to your Queen,
Who begs of Heav'n to be dismiss'd from Rule,
When once she ceases to espouse your Cause,
And study your Content: Welcome again,
And let me boast there's not a Prince on Earth
Who loves his Subjects with a greater Love;
Nor can I think that Subjects e'er deserv'd
More favour from their Prince than you: Be quick
To tell me your Demands, for all your Wants
I suffer as my own.

Raleigh. ————— Long live the Queen
To bless her Subjects, and adorn the World:
And may her Subjects long revere her sway,
And learn to know the Happiness she gives.
--- Your Parliament, most gracious Queen, concern'd
To lengthen out the Blessings of your Reign,
Most humbly beg that, what these Instruments
Contain, your Royal Goodness may confirm
As Laws, which late Posterity will bless.

Queen. Read their Contents, My Lord, and they shall
If plainly needful for the Publick good. [pass,

Burleigh Reads.

Madam, the First proposes to enlist
Three Thousand Men to be your Royal Guard,
Lest, by Surprize, a Foreign Pow'r,
Or homebred Faction should attempt your Life,
And this sad Realm too late bewail the Deed.
The next impow'rs your Majesty to raise
The proper Sums to pay the Charge of War,
And with a due Support maintain the Throne.

Queen. My Subjects give me with a liberal Hand---

Bur.

Bur. The Third intreats your Majesty's Consent
T'Impeach Lord *Essex* of High-Treason, and
In full explains the Reasons of the Charge.

The Queen appears in Confusion.

Queen. Speak Nottingham, good Rutland quickly
Unless 'tis all a Dream, and Fancy draws [speak!
This horrid Scene of Things----am I awake
And on the Throne?-----alas 'tis all too true.
For Sleep's a Stranger to surprize like mine----
I ne'er cou'd think Ingratitude had Place } *Rising in a*
In upright Minds; and when Injustice courts } *Rage.*
The Hand of Pow'r, 'tis Wisdom to withhold
The Blow.

South. Madam, 'tis Virtue pleads in *Essex*' Cause
And twill be Glory to attempt to save him:
His Fault is to discern a Statesman's Guile,
And scorn the Arts his Soul could never practise.
His utmost Pride to serve his native Land,
And plume eternal Conquest on her Arms.
Already he has humbled in the Dust
The Pride of *Spain*, and seiz'd upon their Fleets
When fraught with half the Riches of its Mines.
---But this is all forgot, and should your Grace
Desert him now, he's lost, he's gone for ever.

Queen. Ungrateful People, hear *Southampton*'s Plea,
For Innocence and Honour, such is he
Whose Life and Fame you labour to destroy:
But when dire Envy plots the Fall of Virtue,
Princes themselves should die with Joy to save it.

Petitioners Kneel.

Ral. Most gracious Queen! forgive our forward
And we offend no more ---- [Zeal

Bur. ----- May't please your Grace
To spare Reproach, and with a patient Ear
Attend the Reasons that confirm his Guilt.

Queen. What then are you a Partner of their Crimes?
Dare

Dare you insist upon the Gen'ral's Fall?

---But 'twas agreed, and you contriv'd the Scheme.

--- 'Tis plainly so; the Shade of Essex check'd

Your rising Growth, so down he falls to make

More room for you: I'll hear no more---be gone

And leave me to my self. Stay Nottingham,

[*Exeunt Burleigh, Raleigh, and Petitioners, one way, Southampton and Rutland, another.*]

And with thy Friendship give me some Relief.

—O that wild Frenzy would possess my Soul

And put an End to Thought! or that my Rage

Could vent the Tortures I endure; in vain

I wish, in vain I rave, my Heart still heaves

With stubborn Sorrow, and my Eyes o'erflow

With Female Tears---thus long deny'd in vain.

Nott. What shall a Queen; the Idol of the World,

Bewail the Sting of Sorrow? Shall Distress

Presume t'eclipse the Lustre of a Crown

While Nations only live for your Repose?

Queen. Ah! Nottingham, there's one I'd die to serve,

And think him worthy of the Sacrifice;

—But him these Sons of Cruelty and Guile

Have jointly studied to destroy, and I,

Such is the Fate of Princes, must withhold

My guardian Aid, lest impious Tongues profane

My Virgin Truth, and Majesty should stalk

With sullen State away.

Nott. ——— Alas my Queen!

Are you so firm in this heroick Thought?

So much the Mistress of your own Desires

As to neglect his Fate, tho' on his Knees,

He plead for Pardon in the softest Strains;

And Woe and Pity silently exert

Their pow'rful Influence on your yielding Heart?

Queen. O let me hear that moving Thought no more!

Nor ever may I view so sad a Scene!

—But 'tis my Hope t'invalidate his Charge,

While yet in Ireland he remains in Arms,

And

And unexpos'd protect him from the Snare ;
 Else when he comes I know his haughty Soul
 Will urge him on to such audacious Deeds,
 As will by Force oblige me to withdraw
 My friendly Aid, and give him up to Fate.

Nott. How can your Grace withdraw your Aid, or
 Him up to Fate, when ev'ry Woe he feels [give
 Will torture you, and you'll oft wish to die
 In vain to lengthen out his Days?

Queen. ————— O Heaven!

Thy Words are Daggers to my Heart, and Life
 Already seems too burthensome to bear ;
 Yet should these Torments ev'ry Hour increase,
 Till friendly Death my pensive Soul release,
 I'd dare to leave this Heroe to his Doom,
 Nay die my self with Sorrow on his Tomb,
 Ere black Reproach obscure my shining Sway,
 And all my Glories roll in Clouds away.

Exeunt.

The End of the First Act.



A C T: II.

Enter Rutland and Southampton.

Rut. **T**WAS bravely done, *Southampton*, to defend
 My dearest *Essex* with such noble warmth,
 Such Goodness in Excess: Oh may thy Soul
 Still glory in its Truth, still firmly plead
 The Merits of thy Friend, lest Death attend

Exit

On

On Cecil's Arts, and, while soft Mercy sleeps,
My *Essex* should become the Monster's Prey.

South. Alas my Friendship pleads in vain, and Death
With all his Pomp already is in view.

Rut. What can you mean my Lord? sure *Essex* lives,
And, if he lives, my Soul shall be at ease:

---But speak *Southampton*, in a Moment speak,
And cure the Anguish of my doubting Heart.

(*Southampton continues silent.*)

What! not a Word! why then some Villain's Sword
Has ruin'd all my Joys, and *Burleigh's* Fraud
Prevails: O cure this Longing of my Soul,
And let me know the Rigour of my Fate,
That Death, or Madness may conclude my Pain.

South. Be patient, Madam, for he lives. But yet---

Rut. He lives! my Lord, yet lives! then welcome all
The Woes Mankind can feel: for, while he lives,
And mutual Passion flames in either Soul,
I'm guarded from their Rage.

South. ----- He lives 'tis true,
But cannot long: for, on the brink of Fate,
He pauses now, and *Burleigh* is the Fiend
That urges on his Doom.-----

Rut. ----- Amazement chills me!
'Twas but the Moment past the Queen resolv'd,
In Justice to his Deeds, to guard his Life,
And save him from his Foes.

South. ----- But his Return
Has made her Mercy vain -----

Rut. ----- What is my Lord
Return'd! Oh bear me quickly to his Arms,
That I may speak my Joy in Sighs, and Tears,
And all the moving Eloquence of Love.

South. Alas! you talk as when auspicious Heav'n
Smil'd on your Vows, and *Essex* was ador'd
By half the World; but all those Hours are fled,
And Death, and Darkness are behind -----

Rut. Good Heav'n! Distraction and Despair confound
My

My troubled Sense, and baffle all my Thoughts;
 What can be done to save him? ---- if he dies----
 Oh horrible to think! ---- it must not be.

---- What if you haste this Moment to my Lord,
 And from us both, conjure him to return,
 E're Fraud and Vengeance snatch him from the World!

South. In vain! for envious *Burleigh* has the News,
 And 'tis too late to struggle in the Snare.

Rut. Then give me Way, this Moment I'll confess
 Our Marriage to the Queen, and plead his Cause
 In all the Strains of Love; the moving Tale
 Shall sooth her Rage, and guard him from his Fate!
 Or at her Feet I'll die to expiate his Crime,
 And prove my Passion worthy of my Lord----

[Offers to be gone.

South. Oh, hold, or sure Destruction waits you both;
 For, should the Queen imagine such a Band
 Had join'd your Vows, not all his glorious Deeds
 Can lengthen out his Days, nor all her Love
 Commiserate his End; there's Nought remains
 But to enlarge upon his Worth, and leave
 The rest to Heav'n, and her--- But see! she comes,
 Like silver *Cynthia* fully'd o'er with Clouds,
 Majestically sad.--- Madam retire;
 Unless your Soul's so constant as to bear
 Your Lord's Disgrace unmov'd, or see him kneel
 In vain.---

Rut. Alas! you fright me with the Thought,
 For sure my streaming-Tears would speak my Pain,
 And publish all my Love; sure I should fly
 To his Embrace, and so encircled, dare
 The utmost Rage of Fate; for 'tis in him
 My Joys are center'd, and with him I lose
 My Peace of Mind for ever.---

[Exit.

Enter

Enter Queen, Burleigh, &c.

Queen.

Impossible
Essex arriv'd! sure 'tis some base Design,
By Treason form'd, to abuse our Royal Faith;
And cheat a Heroe of his due Rewards.

Bur. Pardon me, gracious Queen, if I again
Attest th' ungrateful Truth, that Favourite Lord,
Despising your Command, has dar'd to leave
The War unfinish'd, and with Kingly Pomp
Now Marches to defend the haughty Deed.

Queen. What will the Traytor insolently dare
To brave me to my Face? It cannot be;
For when he dares, he dies, tho' all Mankind
Should plead his Pardon, and my tortur'd Heart
Stream Blood in soft Compassion for his Fate.

Bur. Still popular in Guilt he courts the Croud;
That dazled with an outside Show, appears
His Train, and his Defence; around they throng
Impatient to survey their boasted Chief,
And, wond'ring at his Form, with eager Gaze
Adore him as he rides in State along;
While Shouts, like Thunder, in redoubled Peals
Ring to the Skies, and hail him as their Lord.

Hark! from afar th' increasing Sounds approach,
And thicken on the Ear; the Conq'r'r comes
And 'tis but just that Triumphs should reward
His Years of Toil, and give him all his Fame.

Queen. And is it really thus? why then 'tis Time
T' assert the Throne, and crush him ere he soars
Beyond the Reach of Pow'r; double my Guards,
And let each Soldier rest upon his Arms,
That none may dare to question our Commands,
Or justify the Traytor in his Guilt.

Bur. Alas! my Sovereign! fruitless in your Care,
If once he enter these devoted Walls;
For with such Zeal the People are his Slaves,

That

That they will die with Joy in his Defence:
Then banish him the Court, 'till long Disgrace
Has render'd him obnoxious to their Hate,
And so he falls unhonour'd, and unmourn'd.

Queen. How can'st thou think that I would sooth a
Or trifle with my Wrongs? What Soul is thine [Croud?
That trembles to confront the Man it hates?
For 'tis thy Dread of *Essex*, and his Rage,
That move thee thus to lengthen out his Doom.
But know, thou Coward! that when I resolve
'Tis done, and Fear is foreign to my Nature.

South. Madam, my Friend this Moment will appear
To vindicate his Fame; I hear the Sounds [Shout.
Of his Approach; yet, while this Moment lasts,
Permit me to assert his Innocence,
And plead in his Behalf: The Earl is brave,
And stands the foremost in the Lists of Fame,
But envious Souls have studied his Disgrace,
And toil incessant to eclipse his Deeds:
Such *Burleigh* is, and such have been his Schemes;
I dare avow this Truth, and when your Grace
Shall view the General bleeding on the Earth,
Deserted by his Friends; deform'd with Death;
And branded with Disgrace, I'm sure you'll mourn
A brave Man lost.

Queen. ——— O dreadful Scene of Things!
Ye heavenly Pow'rs! instruct my dubious Mind
To strike with Justice, or with Mercy save ---
--- This is the State of Kings; we sit enthron'd
With Pomp and Majesty, and proudly take
The Homage of the World; We bear the Wealth
Of Nations on a Robe, and feed the Sense
With Delicates unknown to vulgar Tastes:
But finds the Soul Contentment in a Crown
Or all the Dignity it boasts? Ah no!
That Jewel is deny'd to glitter there,
But shines unheeded in the humble Field,
Where Peasants toil for the Support of Life.

-- Oh

--- Oh had my Soul but known no higher State,
I had been happy too!

Enter Essex.

Essex. ——— Long live the Queen! [Kneels.
Your Essex, from the Rage of War return'd
Again in Safety, bends beneath your Feet,
And consecrates the Trophies of the Field
To you, the Guardian Genius of his Fate!
Oh may your wonted Grace reward my Toil
And I am blest'd indeed! ———

——— Why looks the Queen
With such a scornful Brow, and turns away
With such disdainful State? 'Tis then too true [Rises.
That I'm undone --- Some base designing Slave,
While I was fighting in my Country's Cause,
Has wrong'd my Deeds, and with the meanest Arts
Shed Poison on my Name, or I had held
My dear-bought Glory still, and still possess'd
A Title to your Grace.

Queen. ——— How canst thou dare
Pretend that Fraud has tarnish'd o'er thy Fame,
Or studied thy Disgrace? Has not thy Pride
Assum'd a Regal Power, and in effect
Deny'd Obedience to our Laws? Forbear
The trifling Charge, and, if thou canst, defend
The bold Commission of thy trait'rous Deeds.

Essex. My Deeds, dread Sovereign! have been ever
As need not a Defence; such as will shine [such
With native Light, and shed a Glory round:
Such as were acted in the open Day,
And prove an honest Soul that scorn'd a Thought
Of private Int'rest, or a single Wish
The least injurious to the publick Good.

Queen. Whence then this base Desertion of thy Troops
Against our strict and absolute Command?

Essex. If, to return victorious from the Field

Be base, I glory in the Deed: 'Tis true,
 Your sacred Order ought to be obey'd;
 But where's the Man who can with Patience bear
 The hellish Arts of such a Thing as this?
 An hoary Traitor! who, with secret Guile,
 Marks out for Ruin all who bravely serve
 Their Sovereign, and the Realm; who builds his Rule
 Upon the Vices of a venal World;
 And flatters Princes into lawless Rule.

Queen. Patience good Heav'n! or I shall burst with
 Insulted to my Face! my Friends abus'd, [Rage;
 And Majesty defy'd! --- But I'll no more ---
 The Ruin thou deserv'st must be thy Fate

[*Exeunt Queen, &c.*

Manent, Essex, and Southampton.

Essex. The Ruin I deserve! --- 'tis well; yet once
 There was a Time when *Essex* was receiv'd
 On milder Terms; when, seated by her Throne,
 The greatest Glories of the Realm were mine;
 When, deaf to all the Babblings of the World,
 She listen'd to my Voice the live-long Day,
 And scarce the midnight Hour could end the Tale:
 But now --- she storms at my Approach, and Death
 Must be my Doom. My Reign has been too long,
 And *Cecil's* Grandeur rises on my Fall.
 Ah my *Southampton*! leave me to my Fate,
 And court the rising Sun.

South. --- 'Tis true, my Lord,
 That I have long admir'd the Virtues you possess,
 And held the Honour of your nearest Thoughts;
 Yet, while your Grandeur needed no Support,
 And Thousands offer'd everlasting Love,
 I only silent check'd the struggling Vow
 Of needless Service, and unquestion'd Faith;
 But, now your Days of Sorrow are arriv'd,
 I give it Way, and, by yon azure Heav'n,

Devote

Devote my Life and Fortune to my Friend,
Receive them from my Soul, and, when my Zeal
Shall cool in thy Defence, may all thy Woes,
And twice ten Thousand more distract my Thoughts,
And I become the Scorn of all Mankind!

Essex. And is there still such Goodness here below?
Oh my brave Friend what Gratitude is due
To thy Desert? more than Expression knows,
Or Friendship can describe. ----

Enter Burleigh and other Lords.

Bur. ——— The Queen, my Lord,
Hath sent us to dismiss you from the Court:
The Offices you held are now bestow'd
On other Lords, and tho' I grieve t' unfold
Her stern Command, it is her Royal Will
That you remain a Pris'ner in your House,
'Till her Indulgence grant you a Release;
And that, to prove your Loyalty, you send
The Gen'ral's Staff, wherewith she grac'd your Arms,
And sent you to the Field.

Essex. ——— So then this Wretch
Dissembles Sorrow for my Fate, and hopes
That I'm deceiv'd; yet, in malicious Smiles,
Can speak my Ruin, and with eager Joy
Redouble all my Woes.

Bur. My Lord, we wait for your Resolve, and hope
'Twill be as mild as Mercy, calm as Peace.

Essex. And wilt thou then be faithful to thy Charge,
And tell her to beware of secret Foes?
Such as in humble wise aspire to Rule,
And with dissembled Piety betray;
Such as, like Serpents in the flow'ry Field
Sit brooding Death, yet wonder at the Wound:
Such, whose insatiate Avarice of Gold
Is like the Whirlpool, whose devouring Wheel,

With giddy Circles, turns the Vessels round,
Then swallows them for ever. -----

South. ----- Dar'ft thou tell
Her Majesty fuch Truths; and that thy felf
Art he, the Serpent for destructive Guile;
The greedy Whirlpool for Defire of Gold?

Bur. I dare the utmost of *Southampton's* Hate,
And scorn at once his Dictates and his Rage ---
But yet I'm calm --- my Lord I've waited long
Expecting your Reply, and fould rejoice,
In fpite of all my Wrongs, to ferve a Man
Whofe matchlefs Virtues are the Boaft of Fame.

Effex. Away! my Soul difdains thy fawning Arts,
And, confcious of untainted Faith, denies,
With fordid Awe, to bend beneath a Throne,
And beg forgiveness of imagin'd Crimes
To lengthen out the Pageantry of Life.

Bur. Is this then all the Sovereign Pow'r deserves
For fuch unbounded Inftances of Love?
This all th' Obedience which your stubborn Soul
Can deign to offer to redeem her Grace?

Effex. Hold Statesman! nor presume with impious
To doubt my Loyalty, or Gratitude; [Tongue
'Tis thou alone that I difdain to court,
And from thy wicked Arts appeal; the Queen!
The Queen fhall be my Judge: Who, ever Good
And Gracious, ne'er condemns a Slave unheard;
To her alone, who made me what I am,
I fhall resign the Offices I hold,
And, if fhe feeks my Life, without a Groan
I die at her Command.

Bur. ----- 'Tis well, my Lord!
Ev'n as you wifh the Queen fhall be your Judge.

[*Exeunt Burleigh, &c.*

Effex. O my *Southampton*! Oh my Friend! a Name
More worth than all the Empires of the Globe!
You fee my Fate's at Hand, and *Cecil* dares
To glory in the Deed: Muft I be led

Then

Then tamely to the Block? nor once attempt
To ward the fatal Blow? yet not for Life,
Or all the Honours that a Prince can give,
Would I desire to lengthen out its Date:
But still there hangs a Wish upon my Soul
For *Rutland's* sake, my charming lovely Bride!
Who scarce had blest'd me with a Lover's Joy,
Ere Arms, and Glory call'd me to the Field;
And now, arriving eager to restore
Her ravish'd Bliss, and banish all her Woes,
My Death ensues to break her tender Heart,
And sink her down with sorrow to the Grave.

South. It must not be---but lest our Foes prevail,
I'll go this Instant to defend your Cause,
And plead your Merit with unbated Zeal;
Perhaps the Queen relents, and then, my Friend!
Your Life and Honours are again your own.

[*Exit.*

Essex. My Life and Honours are again my own!
Must *Essex* then descend to sue for Life?
And beg those Titles which his Sword atchiev'd
With Years of Toil, amid the Rage of War?
O Patience aid me---'tis too great a Load

[*Enter several Courtiers passing over the Stage, who
scornfully smile on Essex and depart.*

For Constancy to bear _____

_____ Ha! is it so?

Am I become the laughing Stock of Fools?
Why 'twas but now that thousands such as these
Liv'd on my Breath, and, studious of my Will,
With hasty Zeal prevented my Command;
But all those Days are gone, and envious Time
Has chang'd the golden Scene. Why this is Life,
And such the Friends of Pow'r: Oh who would wish
To dwell in Courts, or study to be great?
Alas! I'm sick of all its empty Joys

And in the silent Grave alone expect
To be at Ease—Earth will receive her Son,
And Deaths cold Hand for ever be my Guard
From all the Miseries Mankind endure.

Enter Countess of Essex.

Ha! art thou come, thou Charmer of my Soul?
To mourn my Ruin, and with streaming Eyes
Attend thy *Essex* to his Tomb, for there
The bridal Bed's prepar'd, and only there
Must we embrace.

C. Essex. ——— Oh my lov'd Lord! how sad,
How mournful is the Welcome I receive!
Alas! I'd cheer'd my Soul with other Thoughts,
And gayly fancied that our future Years
Would all be spent in Happiness, and Love;
But now those Dreams are vanish'd all away,
And one black Scene of Misery's to come.

Essex. Come to my Arms, thou fairest of thy Sex!
Thou purest Excellence! come to my Arms,
And think of Danger and of Grief no more.
By Heav'n! thy Angel Voice has hung Delight
Upon the tragick Tale, and made e'en Death
Look pleasing; I'd forgot that Ruin waits
To sweep me from the World, and, lost in Love,
Indulg'd the rising Transports of my Soul:
Then let's embrace, and talk such tender Things
As will deceive our Woes, and gently charm
Our mutual Anguish into Peace.

C. Essex. ——— Alas!
My dearest *Essex*! I would gladly talk
Of blissful Scenes, and long revolving Joys:
But when the kindling Warmth begins to glow,
And infant Pleasure flutters round my Heart,
Sad apprehension of our future Woes
Darkens my Soul, and all the Hopes of Bliss
Vanish at once from my deluded Thought.

“ Essex.

“ *Essex.* Ah why my lovely Mourner should we
 “ For distant Evils, and refuse the Joys [grieve
 “ Which yet are in our Pow’r? Oh had my Fate
 “ Depriv’d me of thy Charms, I’d been a Wretch
 “ Indeed! but now the keenest of my Wrongs
 “ Shall dart their Stings in vain:” ’Tis true that Courts,
 And all the noisy Pleasures they bestow
 Are ours no more; yet, bless’d with purer Joys,
 We’ll live retir’d from all their gawdy Pomp;
 The Woodland Shade shall be our future Haunt,
 Where, lost to all Mankind, our Years shall roll
 In Love and Peace away.

C. *Essex.* ——— Oh happy State!
 Too happy for a Doom like ours! --- in vain
 My dearest Lord you Image to your Soul
 Such golden Dreams of Happiness to come;
 For cruel *Cecil* keeps you still in View,
 And with eternal Malice racks his Brain
 To hasten on your Fate: Ah! should Success
 Attend his Arts, where, where must I retreat
 T’indulge my Sorrows, till retreating Life
 Should ebb in Tears away? Alas my Lord!
 The Woodland Shades would give me no Relief,
 Nor all the Pleasures of the rural World;
 No, weeping o’er your Tomb, in dumb Despair,
 I’ll watch the silent, melancholy Hours,
 Till friendly Death, in Pity to my Woes,
 At last dismiss my pensive Soul to Heav’n.

Essex. O *Burleigh*! now, ’tis now alone I feel
 The curst Effect of thy malignant Deeds;
 The loss of Honour, and my Prince’s Love,
 Nay e’en the Prospect of approaching Death
 I could have suffer’d with a dauntless Soul;
 But when thy Woes, my lovely Charmer, rise
 Before my troubled Thought, in all that Pomp
 Of silent Anguish, and extreme Distress,
 I grow a Coward, and with streaming Tears,

Lament that Innocence like thine should know
Such miserable Fate.

C. Essex. ——— Alas my Lord!
To mourn becomes familiar to me now,
Black Melancholy seizes on my Soul,
And hangs her deepest Gloom on ev'ry Sense ----

Essex. Come let's forget that we have Cause to mourn,
And give unbounded Loose to Love and Joy.
--By Heav'n she weeps, and, down her crimson Cheek
The pearly Tears descend, like morning Dew
Upon the new-blown Rose; oh, say my Fair!
My Life! my Soul! why this o'er flowing Stream
Of sudden Sorrow gushes from your Eye,
When Love and Joy are nam'd?

C. Essex. ——— O talk of Love
And Joy no more----the Queen, the jealous Queen!
With cruel Hand, will banish both away
For ever: O my dearest Lord, we stand
Upon the Brink of Fate; around us watch
A thousand Devils who, with eager haste,
Long to immerge us in the Gulph beneath;
O think! if one should, with malicious Joy,
Betray our secret Marriage to the Queen;
I die with Terror of the Thought ---- Farewell
My Lord--- good Heav'n defend you from her Rage,
And I shall be at Ease. ----

Essex. ——— What must we part
So soon? It must be so --- Farewell ---- the Hand
[Exit *C. Essex.*

Of Fate divides us, and we must obey. ----
Now Pain takes Place, and every Joy is lost;
While she was here to sooth my sullen Thoughts,
And soften all my Cares, 'twas Peace within,
And Scenes of Gladness dawn'd upon my Soul:
But now the busy Passions are at Work,
And like contending Furies, struggle for Command,
'Tis thus the Seamen, who had long been tost
By wintry Tempests, view their native Coast;

A Glimpse of Joy succeeds their Years of Pain,
And secret Pleasure shoots thro' ev'ry Vein :
But, while they gaze, dark Night involves the Skies,
The roaring Winds with adverse Fury rise ;
The shatter'd Bark is hurry'd to the Shore,
And down they sink to rise again no more.

The End of the Second Act.



ACT III. SCENE I.

Countess of NOTTINGHAM, BURLEIGH.

Nott. **O** Cecil ! Statesman ! Friend ! thy timely Aid
Has justify'd my Cause, and giv'n my Soul
Her darling Prospect of Revenge : No more
His Scorn envenoms all my Joys, his Death,
His Death, my Cecil, sets my Brains at Ease,
And his last Groan compleats my Cure.

Bur. ————— Why dwells
My Charmer on such gloomy Thoughts ! Why brood
You o'er your cancell'd Wrongs ? Let *Essex*' Name,
His Scorn, his Memory be lost, his Fate
Indifferent, and his Love despised : New Scenes
Of Joy attend you, and a Length of Bliss :
You speak the Word, and *Essex* dies, his Pow'r,
His Friends, his Vertue, vain ; still on the Watch
I hunt him, like a wounded Deer, through all
His Wiles, and hail the Prospect of his Fate.

Nott.

Nott. ————— Excuse

The Anguish of a jealous Mind, that fears,
And doubts, and loves, still, curs'd with fond Desires,
I doat upon his Charms; yet, torn with Rage,
With fell Disdain, and racking Jealousy,
I wish, I long for his Destruction; yet he lives,
And yet may reign, may revel with the Queen.
And *Rutland*; dreadful Thought! this fires my Soul,
This breaks my Rest, this arms my Heart against
Another Flame, and makes me rave when I
Should love. But now the Queen appear'd in Tears,
Anxious, and gloomy, all her Form disturb'd,
Irresolute, distracted with her Doubts,
Yet prone to Pity, and dissolv'd in Grief.
'Tis certain *Effex* was the Cause.

Bur. ————— What chang'd
Again! What new Contrivance has his Friend,
The proud *Southampton*, found to mitigate
Her Wrath, and calm her stormy Soul?

Nott. ————— Why, sad,
And mournful for the Traytor's Fate; he came
To plead his Cause, and, on his bended Knee,
With all his Eloquence, and Subtilty,
Renew'd her Flame; and, while her willing Ear,
Hung on the Tale, and her relenting Eye
Proclaim'd her injur'd Majesty pleas'd,
Propos'd an Interview, that he himself
Might justify his Deeds, and humbly sue
For her accustom'd Grace.

Bur. ————— Then we are lost,
Again; for, should he once descend to sooth
Her Pride, and yield submission to her Will,
Her Anger cools, and he'll once more resume
His Empire o'er her Heart.

Nott. ————— What, shall he live?
Shall *Effex* live, in Triumph, and at large?
Forbid it Hell: no, rather let us die
Ourselves, to make his Ruin sure. ----

But

But hold, I'm calm again; his own proud Heart
Will urge him to undo himself, and, when
He totters on the Brink of Fate, I'll plunge
Him down at once, or perish in th' Attempt.
But lo! the Queen; retire, good Cecil, while
I wait the lucky Moment to renew
Her Hatred, and awake her Rage. [Exit Bur.

Enter the Queen.

Qu. When will this Hurry of my Thoughts be o'er?
This Pageantry of Life have End? How vain
Are Royalty and State to calm the Mind!
And mitigate our Woes! O could my Soul
But stifle this unruly Flame, and bid
My palpitating Heart be still, I should
Again be Queen, and make the publick Good
The real Object of my Care: But now,
Mad Passion's all my Guide, and right, and wrong,
Reverse their Nature, mingle and are lost,
Just as the Tyrant wills---Assist me, Heaven,
Or all the Glories of my former Reign
Will End in Sorrow, Infamy, and Death.
---- O my dear *Nottingham*, hast thou beheld
My Torture, yet forbore to give me Ease?

Nott. Forgive me, Madam, if respectful Awe,
And cautious Duty, taught me to avoid
Your troubled Hours, and dread th' Intrusion on
Your private Thoughts: Princes, like Gods, retire
From human Ken, and guard their secret Woes
From common Gaze.

Queen. ————— O *Nottingham*! my Friend,
My Comforter, how little dost thou know
What Horrors rack my Soul; how little Ease
Vain Pomp, and Kingly Grandeur, can afford?
How much I long to be dismiss'd from Form,
From Ceremony, State, and Pow'r, to herd
With Industry, and Happiness; to be

The

The Queen, the Mistress of my own Desires,
 Beneath the Rage of Envy or the Thirst
 Of Fame ! O Fame ! what Sorrows are thy Guard !
 How difficult thy Laws ! to thee, to thee,
 We sacrifice the dearest Joys of Life,
 Yet, when thy Brow assumes its gloomy Frown,
 Th' united Toil of Time and Care are lost.

" *Nott.* If Fame, and its fantastick Joys, can shed
 " Such Poison on our Days, if Danger, Toil,
 " And Hardship, lead to its Ascent, let Pow'r,
 " Let Majesty o'er-awe its noxious Might,
 " And clip the Phantom's Wings ; indulge your Soul,
 " And make your Reign as happy as 'tis great.

" *Queen.* Alas ! this sweet Persuasion must not take
 " Possession of my Heart ; Virtue still holds
 " Its Empire o'er my Wishes, and Desires,
 " And binds me down, with obstinate controul,
 " To hear its Dictates, and obey its Lore.
 " When Princes give a Loose to Folly, or
 " To Vice, like Comets burning thro' the Skies
 " Hideous, and huge, they shed down Misery,
 " And light the Nations to their Woe.

" *Nott.* If Virtue then prevails, and Pleasure courts,
 " In vain, with all her soft Enchantments spread
 " Before your View ; resume your nobler Mind,"
 And drive each tempting Passion far away ;
 Let Justice take its Course, assert your Throne,
 And shew the World that Resolution still
 Is yours.

Queen. ——— And dares the World to scan my Deeds,
 Or question my Resolves ?

Nott. ——— Most sure it does,
 And with free Speech upbraids your slow Revenge,
 For such accumulated Wrongs.

Queen. ——— What Wrongs ?
 Who is't deserves such hasty Vengeance ? Sure
 'Tis I'm the Judge, and, when 'tis just to speak,

A Traytor's Doom, 'tis done, and half Mankind
Shall tremble at a Woman's Name.

Nott. ————— With all
Submission to my Sovereign's Will, might I
But whisper out the Man? —————

Queen. Ah Nottingham, thine honest Zeal awakes
My sleeping Rage, and all my Soul's a Flame,
At the disgraceful Tale : Yes, *Effex*, proud,
Imperious, frantick, *Effex* is the Man ; 'tis he
That has disdain'd my Pow'r, despis'd my Will,
Resisted my Commands, and thrown a Cloud
O'er all my future Reign.

Nott. If this be true, for Truth, for Honour's Sake,
Assert your Character, and be no more
A Slave to Passion, or a Friend to Vice,
Down with this inmate Foe, and let the World
Confess your Courage equal to your Fame.

Queen. Will not my People murmur at his Fall,
And with joint Fury, study to revenge
Th' imaginary Wrong?

Nott. Fear not, the People, they resent his Pride,
His Avarice, his sly Hypocrisy,
His wild Ambition, his affected Pomp,
And all the Vices of his Soul : No more
With Joy they thunder out his Name, repeat
His Victories, or mourn for his Disgrace.
Odious as Hell he seems to ev'ry Eye,
And ev'ry Heart ; speak but his Fate, and, like
The Ocean in a Storm, they'll rage along,
And sweep him from the World.

Queen. ————— Ha ! is it so,
Thou Traitress ! Poison on thy Name, is this
Thy Virtue ? this thy Tenderness for me ?
For *Effex* ? poor unhappy Lord ! to rail
Till Breath and Speech are lost in Agony
And Rage. How couldst thou dare, with impious
[Tongue,
To breath such Scandal in thy Sovereign's Face ?

Or

Or glean the Malice of the World, to rack
My tortur'd Heart, and double all my Woe?

Nott. 'Twas by your Majesty's Command----

Queen. ----- What then,
Did I inflame your Cheek, or heave your Breast
With all the Malice of a Fiend? Did I
With furious Action spirit ev'ry Limb,
Or flash such vengeful Glances from your Eyes?

Nott. Forgive, dread Queen, th' unhappy Warmth.

Queen. ----- Be dumb,
I'll hear no more. Dear, miserable Man!
How dreadful is thy Fate! begirt with Foes!
And destitute of Friends! Despair scarce wrung
The hasty Passion from my troubled Brain,
Ere a new Fury rose t' augment thy Ills,
And hasten on thy Fate! speak, Syren, speak,
What has my *Essex* done to thee, that thou
Shouldst labour his Destruction? But be gone,
Infection's in thy Look, and Death like thee
Looks horrible. [Exit *Nott.*

----- She's gone, and I'm alone;
Alone, how dreadful is the Sound! let loose
To all the Pangs of disappointed Love,
And Rage, that knows no Bound; my shuddring Soul
Stands frighted at her self: O *Nottingham*!
Thy ill-tim'd Justice, indiscreet Concern,
Have wak'd a thousand Woes, I'm all Confusion ----
A Maze of Torment hurries thro' my Brain,
And in Succession bars th' Approach of Peace.

----- " But shall a Queen,
" A Sovereign, like a pining Girl, complain
" Of broken Vows, and Injuries in Love?
" Forbid it Heav'n! no, rather let him die,
" With all his Charms, like a vile Traytor die,
" And, in his latest Hours, lament the Pride
" That hurl'd him headlong from a Throne."

Enter

Earl of ESSEX.

31

Enter Count. of Essex.

Ah, my good *Rutland*, art thou come to ease
My Cares, and share the Trouble of my Heart?

C. Essex. If ere my Sovereign's Heart was rack'd with
[Cares,
That my whole Life, and all my Pow'r could ease,
With Joy, with Transport, I'd begin the Toil,
And think it Happiness supream.

Queen. ———— Alas!
My Sorrow's deeply rooted in my Heart,
And grows and widens ev'ry Hour; I mourn
The Guilt of *Essex*, and would gladly save
Him from his Fate; but ev'ry Tongue's employ'd
To hasten on his Ruin; and his Woes
Have lost him ev'ry Friend; ev'n *Nottingham*,
My bosom Fav'rite, urges on his Doom,
And calls it Justice to an injur'd Realm.

C. Eff. Yes, when the Great, the Wise, the Brave become,
The Dread of vicious Statesmen, or the Hate
Of vengeful Courtiers, Justice is invoc'd
To be the Tool of Malice, and Revenge.

Queen. ———— But the whole Nation claims
His Life, and loads him with Reproach; no Soul,
But good *Southampton*, speaks in his Behalf,
The Charge is heinous, the Defence but weak,
And, if I save him, what a long Disgrace
Will shade my future Name! lend me thy Arm
I long t' unburthen all my Soul, a strange
Unusual Weight hangs heavy at my Heart,
And I grow sick of Life.

C. Essex. ———— O that kind Heav'n
Would furnish me with Words, so softly sweet,
As might relieve your Woes, and give you Cause
To bless your *Rutland's* Name!

Queen. ———— Speak on, thy Voice
Is Musick, and thy Words steal gently on

My

My Soul ; of *Effex* speak, on him my Thought
 For ever dwells, his Name delights my Ear
 With melancholy Pleasure ; sure he's brave,
 And noble as the first of Men ; Ye Pow'rs !
 Forgive this Fondness for a virtuous, tho'
 Unhappy Man : Sure 'tis no Crime to mourn
 His Fate, or wish to save him.

C. Effex. ————— No 'tis Great,
 'Tis Godlike to forgive, but *Effex* sure
 Was never Guilty, never could offend
 So kind, so good a Queen ; 'tis Malice all,
 'Tis Calumny that taints his manly Deeds,
 And labours to subvert his Fame.

Queen. ————— Speak on
 My *Rutland*, I delight to hear thee, sure
 Thy Soul must sympathize with mine, and both
 Indulge a Tenderness alike.

C. Effex. ————— With Joy
 I plead for this unhappy Lord, with true,
 With genuine Pleasure, undertake his Cause,
 Since I'm convinc'd he's innocent ; how oft
 Have I attended, while, to all the Court,
 He dwelt upon your Praise ! remark'd your Shape,
 Your Beauty, Wit, and all the various Charms
 That are a Nation's Gaze ; with Raptures talk'd
 Of your Perfections, till the fleeting Hours
 Were wasted in the Tale, and ev'ry Ear
 Enchanted hung with Pleasure, on the Sound.

Queen. ————— But this
 Was only Talk, and Words oft prostitute
 The Speaker's Soul.

C. Effex. ————— But then his Actions prove
 His Praises all sincere, and ratify
 His Truth inviolable firm. Look back
 On all the various Wonders of his Life,
 His Years of Danger, and a Length of Toil ;
 Examine all the Hero as he stands,
 The Boast of Europe, and the Theme of Fame ;

And

And he'll appear, as such a brave Man should,
Like a bright Sun of Glory, that adorns,
And lights, and comforts all the World below.

Queen. Ah! you grow warm, my *Rutland*; but it suits
My Thoughts, and he is all you say, and more;
For in his Person —————

C. Essex. ————— True his Person boasts
The utmost Graces of the humane Frame,
The Pride, the Honour, of all humane Kind!
All sweet, all lovely; yet severely stern,
And nobly bold, when gen'rous Passion warms
His manly Heart, and sets his Soul on Fire;
Love wantons in his Eye, and in his Smile
The Graces revel; Angels look like him,
With Innocence and Beauty crown'd; all Hearts
Are his: The Matron gazes with Delight
O'er all his Form, and maiden Modesty,
In secret, blushes at his Name.

Queen, ————— She's lost!
Far gone in Passion! all her Soul's alarm'd,
And ev'ry Faculty beats Time to her
Applause: Good *Rutland* are thy Thoughts thine
[own?

Flows all this Rapture from thy Heart? or feigns
It such a gen'rous Zeal in *Essex*' Cause,
That he may live, and I preserve my Peace?
---- Alas she loves him! to Distraction loves him!
And a new Fury haunts me, hideous, black,
And gloomy; Jealousy, with secret Sting,
Sits preying on my Heart, and all within,
Is Horror, and Distraction; here he comes,
Oh now my Soul! be calm, and, like thy self,
Majestically Great; attend his Plea,
With Courage, like a Hero's, or a Saint's
In Flames.

D

Enter

Enter Essex, Bur. Nott. South. Guards, &c.

Essex. Once more, my Royal Mistress, I approach
Your awful Presence, and, with bended Knee,
Acknowledge your Indulgence, thus renew'd.
To see your Face again, array'd in Smiles;
To breath your Grace, and justify my Deeds
In open Day, and to my Sovereign's Ear,
Was all I ask'd of Heaven, the utmost Joy
My luckless Fate could know! by you the Bliss
Was giv'n, to you be all my Gratitude
Confess'd, to you, my Guardian Pow'r in War!
My gentle Saint in Peace!

Queen. ————— My Lord! my Lord!
Your Time's too precious for the idle Breath
Of subtle Flatt'ry, and the Courtier's Art;
Your Life depends upon your Innocence,
And not the studied Musick of your Tongue.

Essex. Madam, you seem to scorn your Soldier's
And trifle with his Fate; a Heart, like mine, [Plea,
Disdains to whisper out unjust Applause,
Or sooth the Pow'r it hates; no not a Life,
Should bribe me to such Baseness. Nature gives
As noble Minds to some of low Degree
As Kings themselves can boast; and when Contempt
Inflames the Wretches Woe, he'll rouse his Soul
T' assert her Dignity, and, in the Scale
Of Virtue, ballance the proud Weight of Pow'r.

Queen. Already you begin to rave, and boast
Equality with Kings: Such Talk will scarce
Excuse your doubtful Deeds, or make the World
Think favourably of your Crimes.

Essex. ————— My Crimes!
The World! Equality with Kings! the Queen's
Resolv'd to kindle Sorrow into Rage,
And punish Rage with Death, or sure she'd touch
My Wounds with gentler Hand, nor aggravate

My

My Pain ; you gave me Pow'r, Command, and sent
Me out your Delegate to War ; advanc'd
So high, endow'd with such a large Controul ;
I thought my Prudence was my Law, myself
Accountable to none, but you ; and, thus,
Believing, gave a Loose to Arms, and Death ;
Or, by soft Leagues, and peaceful Methods, strove
To make sure Conquest, and conclude the War.

Queen. If then your Pow'r was so profusely great
Your Actions should be like, and, ere you left
The hostile Field, your Fame shou'd have been fix'd
For ever sure, by Victory and Peace.

Essex. Begone to Heav'n Desert ! Success henceforth
Must crown the Hero's Toil, or else his Fame
Decays untimely, like a Woman's Love.
You ask for Conquest, yet deny'd me Troops ;
You ask for Peace, and yet condemn my Right
Of treating for that End ; too weak for War,
I labour'd for a Peace, and that's my Crime,
My only Crime, the utmost of my Charge :
Yet, would your *Burleigh* once have dar'd to march
An harraisd Army, thin'd with frequent Fights,
Tir'd, hungry, fainting with Disease, would he
But once have dar'd to march with such a Force,
So weak, and Spiritless, t'attack an Host
Of Rebels, eager, haughty, bold ; enclos'd
With Woods, and moted round with steaming Lakes,
Would he have dar'd the mighty Toil ? No, struck
With Horror, this Tongue-valiant Lord had fled
Affrighted at the hideous Scene, and all
This Silken Train, that court their Sovereign's Smile
With Blandishments, and ev'ry sordid Art,
All, all had fled for Shelter to their Queen,
And trembled underneath her Robe.

Queen. Take care rash Man ! nor tempt my Grace
Thy Fate hangs trembling on thy Lips, and yet [too far,
Thou ragest on, nor wilt regard the Voice
That warns thee to beware ; long have I strove

To whisper Caution to thy Soul, in vain.
 Thy haughty Heart still struggles with its Pride
 And, by excusing, doubles all thy Guilt.
 Wast not ev'n thou the Cause of all these Woes?
 Was not thy Indolence, thy Fear, perhaps
 Thy Treachery, the Cause? if thou wast Brave,
 Or Faithful, early, as the Spring, thy Troops
 Had took the Field, and, while the Summer Sun
 Shone high, thou hadst attack'd their hostile Lines,
 And forc'd a Conquest in the Front of Death,
 And all the Dangers of the War; not shun'd
 A Battle, or withheld thy Soldiers Warmth,
 Till sickly Vapours, and depressing Want,
 Weigh'd down their sprightly Hearts---I see thy Rage
 Boils upward; but be silent, lest thy rude,
 And insolent Deportment rouse that Pow'r
 In all its Wrath, thou hast so oft despis'd.

Effex. Silent! must I be tortur'd on the Rack,
 And not be suffer'd to discharge a Groan?
 By Heav'n, no Pow'r, no Hope of Life, no Fear
 Of Death, shall rob me of my Liberty,
 Or seal my Lips when I am wrong'd; Here stands
 The curst Cause of my Disgrace; 'tis he
 That dares to threaten in his Sovereign's Voice,
 And work out all the Passions of his Soul.

Queen. Madman! thy Pride, thy Folly, and thy Rage
 Like a fierce Storm, will drive thee on thy Fate,
 Tho', at thine Ear, an Angel breath'd his Care,
 And warn'd thee to a Calm; once more reflect
 On thy endanger'd State, and that 'tis I
 Alone have labour'd to secure thy Life,
 And lengthen out thy Days: Go and be safe,
 Be thankful for the Boon; but lest thy Soul
 Shou'd vaunt its Guilt, thine Honours thine Employ. --

Effex. Are yours, again, with Ease I can resign them,
 Nor mourn the trifling Loss; the Air I breathe
 Is more than my Desert it seems, tho' Fame
 Herself has vainly toil'd to sound my Deeds,

For

For *Albion's* Int'rest, and her Sovereign's Fame.
My Honours, my Employ, were dearly earn'd;
While these curs'd Flatt'ers sleep'd at ease
Beneath my potent Guard, and fatten'd on
My Blood; but let the filken, fawning Tribe
Enjoy them, now I care not; far from hence
I'll seek the Lybian Lion's Den, and die,
Beneath an honourable Foe.

South. ————— My Lord ———

Queen. Audacious Traytor! what despise my Grace!

Essex. Traytor! strike me with Thunder, Heav'n!

South. ————— My Lord,

Once more be calm.

Essex. ————— For I have liv'd too long.

Traytor! show me a Man, *Southampton*, great
In Arms, and glorious in the Field, who dares
But think me Traytor, that, with Justice, Strength,
And Energy of Rage, I may defend
My Name, and grave Revenge upon his Heart:
A Traytor! Yes, for the Services beyond
Compare, for Years of Hardship midst the Din
Of War, for Cares at Home, for Toils Abroad,
For Wounds receiv'd, for Treaties made, and All,
All, All the Woes that such a Life can know;
But I depart; a Traytor should not breathe
Where Pow'r, and Justice make Abode.

Queen. Let the rude Monster rave; his Soul, and all
His Faculties shall mourn my Favour lost,
And all the Blessings in my Pow'r to grant:
Like *Cain* thou'lt wander thro' the World alone,
Thy Pow'r, thy Friends, thy Reputation gone;
The Sword, and open Arms disdain to give
Thy Woes an End: Thy Curse shall be to live!

[*Exeunt Queen, &c.* Manent *Essex*, *Southampton*.

South. My Lord, what have you done? alas! this
However noble, and however just, [Warmth,
Will be our Bane; *Burleigh*, and *Nottingham*
With cruel Smiles have listen'd to your Rage,

And ev'n with Certainty foresee your Doom.

Essex. My Doom is welcome, and I'd rather die
A thousand Deaths, than tamely bear such Wrongs.

South. My Lord I'll plead not with your Rage; away,
Let's leave this barb'rous Place, that gentler Thoughts
May mitigate these Tempests of the Soul,
And teach us how to remedy our Woes.

Essex. ---- Ah, there you're right; let's leave all
[Courts, and Men,
Their fawning, false, revengeful Habitants.
Let's herd with milder Monsters, and abide
In Desarts waste, wild, hideous, ----
There Peace and Justice dwell, no secret Foes
Will envy our Retreat, or wish to drive
Us to the World again ---- Oh my dear Friend!
Would you seek Quiet thro' the Maze of Life,
Avoid Ambition; 'tis a dangerous Thing!
Nor fondly court the Favours of a King.
The Road to Grandeur is a Mountain's Brow,
And Ruin roars a threat'ning Gulph below;
While firmly thro' the rugged Path you tread
A thousand Flatt'ers lend their uselefs Aid:
But when Misfortune leads your Steps astray,
Death ends the Toil, and Grandeur soars away.

The End of the Third Act.



ACT



ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter Burleigh and Nottingham.

Nott. JOY to us both my Lord; *Essex*, our Hate,
Our Envy, and our Dread, is fall'n at last;
By his own Pride and Folly fall'n, and we
Shall dance upon his Grave----“ But was such mad,
“ Ungovernable Passion ever seen? such haste
“ To Ruin, such Disdain of Life?” 'Tis strange
The Queen should bear his Insolence so long,
Nor send him to the Tow'r, the fittest Den
For such a Monster's Rage!

Bur. ————— Had you, or I,
Or *England's* greatest Lord, but half so much
Provok'd her Wrath, this Doom had been our Lot
Without Reprieve; for, tho' the Queen's discreet
In Management, she's void of all Disguise;
And, when her Power's withstood, like a fierce Stream,
Confin'd to narrow Bounds, she swells on high,
And ruins all before her.

Nott. ————— Right, my Lord,
Nor had ev'n proud, imperious *Essex* scap'd,
But that her Anger's soften'd by her Love,
And her Heart bleeds with Pity to his Fate:
But neither Pity, Love, nor Pow'r shall screen
Him from Revenge.

Bur. Our Foe himself will furnish out the Means,
 For he's too haughty to forgive Affronts,
 And sullen meditates on every Deed
 That speaks him Famous, Noble, Great, or Good :
 " These he opposes to a Crown, and thinks
 " Himself Superiour ; his own Bosom holds
 " A Mine of Passion, which immediate fires,
 " And scatters every Virtue to the Wind."
 ---- Ev'n now the quickest Sense of injur'd Worth
 Has urg'd him on to Madness ; at his House
 Assembled all his Friends with Troops, and Arms,
 Preparing to assert his Cause, oblige
 The Queen to re-estate him in her Grace,
 And ruin us for his Security.-----

Nott. ---- But vain their Hope, and their Attempts
 Submission I had fear'd, but open Arms [were vain :
 Confirm'd his Curse, and ratify'd his Fate.
 ---- By Heav'n it joy'd me to the Soul to see
 This vaunted Minion humbled in the Dust ;
 To see him vanish, as a falling Star,
 Extinct and lost, who Comet-like had aw'd
 The World ; to see him stript of Honours, Pow'r,
 And Titles, who had grasp'd at all ; his Eye
 Sparkling with Rage, his Spirit vex'd with Pain,
 No Homage, no Submission paid him as
 He mov'd along ; no Welcome from the Wars,
 No Murmurs of Applause, but shun'd, abhor'd,
 And curs'd by all the World. -----

Bur. ----- But one Scene more
 Remains. -----

Nott. ----- But one indeed, fly swift ye Hours
 To hasten my Revenge, and rise ye Fiends !
 Ye Furies of the fiercest Rage, arise !
 And pour your utmost Horrors in my Heart,
 That Pity, Love, and every softer Thought
 May vanish, and give place to Cruelty,
 The Thirst of Vengeance, and Desire of Blood ;
 " That, when his Soul is tortur'd with the Dread

“ Of Death, I may reproach him with my Wrongs,
 “ Increase the Anguish of his Soul, and make
 “ Ev’n his Destruction double all his Woes.”

Enter the Queen, &c.

Queen. ————— That ever *Essex* shou’d
 Presume t’ attack the Throne, or hope to force
 His Sovereign to his Will, he’ll dearly pay
 For such unequal’d Insolence, too late
 Deplore the Rashness of his Deeds: Is he
 Secur’d, my Lord?

Bur. ————— He is, most Gracious Queen,
 And all th’ Associates of his Crime.

Queen. How! could the Traytor insolently hope
 The Nation would espouse his Rebel Cause?
 Or fight to save him?

Bur. ————— So he vainly thought;
 For, in contemptible Attire, he toil’d
 Thro’ every Street, and with his Followers begg’d
 The Pity of his Countrymen; infus’d
 Sedition in their easy Hearts, and arm’d
 The Subject ’gainst his Prince; his Head was bare,
 And Sweat and Dust obscur’d his Manly Face;
 His Form drew Pity, and ev’n Thousands wept
 The Misery they cou’d not cure: Sometimes
 With Heat and Passion he alarm’d their Fears,
 And made them jealous of their Sovereign’s Power;
 And sometimes su’d in humble Wife, produc’d
 His Wounds received in Battle, and rehears’d
 A long Account of Wonders he’d atchiev’d.

Queen. A long Account indeed! for *Essex* oft
 Has serv’d his Country with his dearest Blood ----
 What Pity ’tis such Merit should be lost!
 ---- But I break in upon thy Tale ----

Bur. ————— Fatigu’d
 With Toil of Body, and Disease of Mind,
 Unable to seduce your People from

Their

Their Loyalty to such a Queen, at last
 He to his House retir'd again ; almost
 Alone, forsaken of his Rebel Crew, and left
 A Victim to the Fury of your Guards,
 Who seiz'd him with his Friends disdaining Fate,
 And haughty in the midst of Woe ; no Arm
 Attempting to defend him, nor no Eye
 Bewailing his Disgrace.

Queen. ————— Alas ! the Change !
 How mournful is his Fate ! How can thy Tongue
 Deliver such a Tale, and thy hard Heart
 Not melt at such Misfortunes ! all my Soul's
 Dissolv'd with Tenderness, and I could weep
 For ever, that so brave a Man should know
 Such Misery ----- Where is the Earl ?

Bur. ————— Amidst
 Your Guards, till you command him to the Tow'r.

Queen. The Tow'r ! How can'st thou mention that
 [dire Place !

That Scene of Horror ! that detested House
 Of Sorrow and Despair !

Bur. ————— 'Tis there alone
 He will be safe, and such a Deed as this
 Demands a publick Justice ; Mercy sues
 In vain where Treason is the Crime.

Queen. ————— Is't not enough that I
 Dismiss him from the Court, from Offices
 Of Trust, and all the Honours of his Name,
 But I must grow a Monster ; and destroy
 The noblest Hero all my Realm can boast ?

Bur. I don't insist upon his Death ; but sure
 He ought to be confin'd till Passion cools,
 And he repent of his enormous Crimes ;
 Submission may succeed, and you receive
 Him into Favour with a Grace again.

Queen. I'm all Confusion ! lost in Agony ----
 Leave me a Moment ---- Nottingham will ease
 My Doubts, and help me to resolve [Exeunt Bur. &c.
 But

————— But how!

O *Nottingham*, hast thou the Secret to
Relieve a troubled Heart, to mitigate
A secret Woe, and reconcile my Fame,
My Reason, and its cruel Laws with Love,
And all the Fears so soft a Passion can
Inspire? —————

Nott. ——— Your Majesty's too Wise to need
The small Experience I can boast, too much
The Mistress of your own Desires to act
Amis; besides, my honest simple Heart
Speaks Truth too freely for your Royal Ear,
And renders me obnoxious to your Hate.

Queen. Good *Nottingham*, reproach me not
With Injuries that were th'Effects of Rage,
Concern, and Love; but open all thy Heart,
And talk me to a Calm.

Nott. ——— Madam you've heard
That *Cecil* urges, *Cecil* is your Friend,
And skill'd in all the Statesman's Art; and shall
I venture to advise where he has fail'd?

Queen. What then art thou the dreadful Echo to
His Voice? Wilt thou distract me with the Talk
Of Prisons, and of Death? for surely Death
And Prisons are a-kin; can Female Hearts
Indulge such a black Scene of Cruelty,
And stifle all the Pity of their Souls?

Nott. 'Tis not the Want of Pity, or a Thirst
Of Blood, no Hatred to the Earl, no Wish
For his Destruction, that excite, or him,
Or me to hasten such a Doom; but true
Concern, and Passion for our Sov'reign's Fame:
Already Rumour whispers it abroad
That the *Queen* languishes in Love ----
And doats on *Effex*'s Name; should you remit
Your Vengeance, all Mankind, with easy Heart,
Would credit the ungrateful Tale, and make
Your Flame the Subject of their Songs.

Queen.

Queen. ————— Good Heav'n!
 Relieve my troubled Heart, or I shall dye
 In Torment! sure no Comfort dwells below;
 In vain I plead to hide a Fav'rite's Guilt,
 Or save a Hero from his Fate; no Friend
 Appears to sue in his behalf, or give
 The least Excuse for Mercy. Round me swarm
 His Enemies, and with importunate
 Severity demand his Life; if Death
 Should be his Doom, what Joy, what Happiness
 Can Being give? in vain would Royalty
 Amuse my Cares; in vain would Grandeur spread
 Its Charms to sooth, or quiet my eternal Grief.

" Nott. ————— Shou'd *Effex* 'scape
 " The Punishment his Crimes demand, shou'd he
 " Again deserve your Favour, and again
 " Possess the Honours he has worn so long,
 " Would he presume to court your Royal Bed?
 " Or would you deign to kindle such a Hope
 " And make him Partner of your Throne? But grant
 " You should enoble him so far, How would
 " The Rival Princes, who have vainly su'd
 " Your High Alliance, how would they resent
 " An Union so inferior to their State?
 " Would not Revenge impell them to invade
 " Your Realms, and Blood and Slaughter wait
 " Th' unhappy Vow?

" Queen. ————— Suppose they shou'd, my Fleets
 " My Armies shall support my Love, and all
 " Their Malice, like the Pride of *Spain*, bring on
 " The Ruin of themselves -----

" Nott. ————— Then shou'd the Queen
 " Be happy in one single Wish; her State,
 " Her People, Reputation, Virtue, all
 " Are left to the rude Side of Chance; and Woe
 " And Death may triumph boundless, and at large.

Queen. O Misery! I'd forgot my Character,
 " My People, and my Fame; was lost in Love,

" In

" In Sorrow, in Desire, and all the soft,
 " The tender Languishings a wounded Heart
 " Can know ---- But will they ever dare, these Kings!
 " These bold Invaders! will they ever dare
 " To force my Husband from my Arms, or make
 " A Sovereign's Will depend on theirs?

" *Nott.* ----- If not,
 " Your People will themselves disdain to pay
 " Injurious Homage at a Subject's Feet,
 " Or bow at his Command: An hundred Lords
 " As great as *Essex*, of as noble Blood,
 " Adorn your Court; and would they bend the Knee,
 " To *Essex*, or obey his Laws? Ah no!
 " *Britannia's* Sons have elevated Souls
 " Sublime, and daring; scorn such servile Awe,
 " And, to secure their Rights, will float this Land,
 " Their native Land, with Blood ----

" *Queen.* ----- Support me Heav'n!
 " Aid me my Guardian Angel! Reason fails,
 " My Senses are the Slaves of Love, and round
 " My beating Heart unusual Horror reigns
 " ---What must my *Essex* die, my *Essex* die?
 " Distracting Sound! he dies the Sacrifice
 " Of Honour, and the State; unhappy Man!
 " I follow thee, down to the Grave I go,
 " And mingle with thy Dust: My pensive Shade
 " Shall wait on thine, shall vindicate its Flame,
 " And curse alike the Fate that hurry'd thee
 " Away untimely, while thy Glafs had long
 " To run, and Youth, and Pleasure, Hand in Hand,
 " Ev'n courted thee to live.

" *Nott.* ----- He yet may live,
 Live long, and happy, but when Justice calls,
 A Sov'reign should obey; at least a Shew
 Of Justice shou'd be made, that Kings may hold
 A Title to their Thrones; and, should the Pow'r
 A while detain this Fav'rite from the Court,
 From Liberty, and common Gaze, his Life

At

At once may be secure, and you preserve
Your Fame. —————

Queen. — I yield, dear *Nottingham*! I yield;
Do what you will, but save his Life: Yet hold!
I'll bear him ere he goes, perhaps he'll bend
His stubborn Soul t'implore my Grace; excuse
His fancy'd Guilt, and prove his Innocence:
Oh! that he may, and I shall be at peace;
For all my Rage is ebb'd away, I long
To save him, Mercy softens ev'ry Thought,
And Love will be obey'd --- Let him approach---
Without his Guards ---- For we will be alone.

[*Exit Nott.*

Queen. Soft, soft my Heart! be quiet, gentle, calm
My Bosom, and let all my Soul be still.
Alas how vain the Wish! A thousand Thoughts
All dark, confus'd and gloomy, cloud my Brain;
My Blood runs riot through my Veins, each Pulse
Beats quick th' Alarms of Passion, and of Love;
And Pain and Pleasure flutter round my Heart.
---He comes! he comes! greatly majestick still,
Tho' misery has stung his Soul, and Death
With all his Terrors hover'd in his View.

Enter Essex.

Amid this wild Distraction of my Thoughts,
This Hurry of the Mind, your Majesty
Will Pardon what a Pris'ner speaks, will spare
To aggravate his Woes with cruel Scorn,
Or new enkindled Rage: A thousand Foes
Have waited for my Soul, have urg'd me on
To Ruin, with unmanly Wrongs: You, you
Alone have been my Refuge, my Defence,
And all the Guard my Innocence can trust:
To you I bend in lowest Gratitude,
And bless your timely Grace.

Queen.

Queen. ———— Rise, *Essex* rise,
I'm now grown cool, desire to save thee from
Thine Enemies, and give thee Time to plead
In thy Defence ————

Essex. You're wondrous good, and breathe
Compassion ev'n to guilty Men ; at least
Such heavenly Kindness lulls my stormy Soul,
And I grow calm again : My Life is now
Submitted to your Will, and, when you give
Command, patient I mingle with the Dead,
Nor breathe a single Murmur at my Doom.

Queen. Are then your reasonable Thoughts return'd?
And dare I trust you with your Life? If so,
Make haste to use the present Hour, and urge
The utmost in your own Excuse, that I,
When Time shall serve, may plead in your behalf,
And make that Justice which your Foes would stile
A Partial Lenity, and Favour ill ---
Deserv'd. ————

Essex. Madam ! the Dread of Death alone
Gives me so little Pain, that I should scarce
Exchange a Sentence to prevent my Fate ;
No not the keenest Torments shou'd extort
A single Groan ; but, if I speak, I speak
To clear my injur'd Name ; to tell Mankind,
That Honour, Virtue, were the End of all
My Deeds ; that all the Errors of my Life
Were human Frailty, not Design to wrong
My Sov'reign, or transgress the Laws ; that Pride
Ambition, Malice have inflam'd my Foes,
And pav'd the Way to my Disgrace.

Queen. ———— My Lord !
Beware of Passion ; 'tis your only Crime,
I fear 'twill hasten on your Ruin, tho'
Ev'n I shou'd stand in your Defence ; the Laws
Are rigid, and your Enemies severe :
Then lay restraint upon your fiery Soul,
And learn to bear with Patience all the Ills

That

That now hang heavy on your Heart ; lest you
Forget how dearly I regard your Life,
How soon I have forgiv'n your Faults.

Essex. ————— Hard is
The Task your Grace enjoins, for who can bear
The Injuries of wicked Men, and not
Give Fire to all the Passion of his Soul?
Yet at my Queen's Command I drop my Rage,
Grow tame and manageable, and, for once,
Bow down submissive to th' Oppressor's Rod.

————— Yet ere I die
I beg this Favour on my Knees, and hope
Your Goodness will confirm my Pray'r.

Queen. ————— My Lord,
I grant whate'er you ask, and shall rejoice
T' alleviate all your Woes ; wou'd gladly chase
This Gloom away that overclouds your Soul,
And open to your View an happier Scene
Replete with Happiness, and Fame, and Joy.

Essex. Alas ! I dream no more of Happiness ;
The World is full of Misery, and Life
A Round of Wretchedness and Pain ; if Joy
And Pleasure were in Fate to give, no Hand
But yours cou'd make the transient Bounty mine ;
'Tis o'er, 'tis past, and all I now implore
Is this ; That good *Southampton* may escape
His threatned Doom, for Truth, for Friendship's Sake ;
Nor e'er have Cause to curse that Virtue, which
Procur'd his Bane. That, when I die, the Stroke
May not be giv'n amid a Nation's Gaze,
Nor my last Moments be disturb'd by their
Insulting Breath : No, I have liv'd in Fame,
And let me die in Peace. To crown the Whole,
Let me intreat your Majesty to speak
Of *Essex*, as a Man forgiv'n, to say
His Pride, his Follies are forgot, and grave
His Pardon on his Tomb.

Queen.

Queen. ————— Southampton's Life
Shall be my Care, and, if ev'n *Essex* die,
His Death shall be as secret as his Thoughts,
And all his Frailties slumber with his Dust.

Essex. Low on my Knees let me express my Thanks,
My Gratitude of Soul, and all the soft,
The tender Sentiments such Grace inspires.

--- Now I shall think on Death as a Retreat
From Cares, and Woes; a rigid Friend that frowns
Out Benefits, and threatens a Cure: May I live
And Happiness be yours, your Reign be long,
Your Actions Glorious, and your End Serene;
May Fame forever sound your Praise, the World
Admire your Deeds: And now, Great Queen, from your
Lov'd Presence I retire, and patient leave
The Hopes of Life, and all its Joys behind.

Queen. That Sound, my Lord, rings doleful in my
Perhaps we ne'er shall meet again, and you [Ears;
Divine aright --- Then sure there's something due
To Services receiv'd, to Years of Toil, ---
Of Danger, in the tented Field --- My Lord,
I long to save you from so hard a Fate,
And justify your Fame: an Hero claims
The utmost Favour from his Prince, deserves
The last Indulgence that the Laws can give.
--- Then take this Jewel, wear it for my Sake,
And for your own; return it when your Wants
Require my Aid, and, by th' Immortal Pow'rs
I swear, to grant whatever you demand.

Essex. Amazing Goodness! how shall I express
My Thankfulness! Oh how shall I atone
Th' Affronts I've offer'd to your Rule? O let
Your Mercy blot them from your Heart, and think
Repentant *Essex*, as a dying Man,
Sincerely mourns his Folly, and his Crimes.

Queen. No more my Lord, you soften me too much,
Perhaps I have done wrong, and Sense of Fame
May urge me to recall the forfeit Grace.

Here Guards! convey your Pris'ner to the Tow'r,
And treat him as becomes his Character.

[*Exeunt Essex, &c.*]

[*Enter Countess of Essex. She kneels by the Queen weeping. After a Pause the Queen.*]

What ails thee *Rutland*? What can be the Cause
That roots thee to the Earth, and binds thy Tongue
In silence? Speak from whence proceed these Tears?
Why beats thy Heart so rudely, and what means
This Violence of Grief?

C. Essex. ——— Oh *Essex*, *Essex*!

Queen. What's *Essex* or his Fate to thee? Suppose
He dies to morrow, hast thou cause to grieve?

C. Essex. Alas too much: O do not mention Death,
My Royal Mistress, for when *Essex* dies,
Your *Rutland* follows to the Grave, and rests
Her cold Remains with his ———

Queen. ——— Thy cold Remains
Must rest with his! Amazement! sure thy Brain
Is hurt, and Phrensy with its monstrous Brood
Has banish'd Reason from her Throne.

C. Essex. ——— Ah me!
Distraction wou'd be Happiness to what
I feel, to what I suffer; Pangs like mine
Eat their own Way thro' ev'ry Vein, and sting
My very Soul; Madness wou'd heal my Wounds,
And sooth the Anguish that torments my Heart.

Qu. See how her Eye-balls roll! how her Nerves work!
She raves! and talks she knows not what! let's leave
The melancholy Sight. O Heav'ns she hangs
Upon my Robe, she grasps my Knees, she's all
Convuls'd, and Nature feels fresh Agonies
Distorting ev'ry Limb. Good *Rutland* let
Me leave thee till a gentler Hour shall bate
This Fury of the dire Disease, and lull
Thee into Calms.

C. Essex.

C. *Essex*. ——— Oh never, never shall
I know one comfortable Moment more,
If you forsake me in this terrible Distress;
I am not Mad, but Sorrow and Despair
Have ty'd my Tongue, and pierc'd me to the Heart;
Yet I will speak, will sue my Sovereign's Grace;
Nor ever leave the Ground, till she relieve
My Woes, and save my Husband's Life: He is,
He is my Husband, and a single Blow
Destroys us both.

Queen. ——— Perdition ever blast thee!
Thy Husband! *Essex* thine!

C. *Essex*. ——— Yes, *Essex*, He
Whom *Burleigh* hates, and studies to destroy,
Who now is hurry'd to the Tow'r, whose Fate's
Determin'd, and who guiltless dies; Oh he
Is mine, our Hearts, our Hands are join'd, and Heav'n
Has ratify'd the Union -----

Queen. ——— But in vain,
For I'll destroy you both; thy Husband! arm
Me good Heaven with Patience, lest, all enrag'd,
I shou'd forget my State, and give my self
The fatal Blow --- Thy Husband! fly, be gone,
Nor let me view that Syren Face, or I'll
Grow mad as thou, and blot out all thy Charms.
Thy Charms! But thou hast none; 'tis Flatt'ry, Paint,
Delusion all; the Emblem of thy Soul!

C. *Essex*. 'Tis Flatt'ry, Paint, Delusion all; 'tis worse,
Ev'n worse than you can think; I grant it all,
And will endure the utmost of your Rage;
But let my *Essex* 'scape! O he is true,
And constant, amiable, brave, and kind;
He's all Perfection; O let him escape
And I shall die in Peace. At his lov'd Name
My Heart beats strong, and, for his Sake, I dare
The greatest Ills of Life. -----

Queen. ——— The greatest Ills
Of Life for ever be thy Lot! as sure

They shall, fated to see thy *Effex* die,
To hear the Wailing of his Soul, to share
The Pangs of his Remorse, his Pride, and all
The Anguish of his Heart.

C. Effex. ————— O Misery!
It will, it must be such a Doom, Oh sad,
Oh lamentable View! O Mercy! Heav'n!
Good Heav'n have Mercy, for there's none below.
But must he die? must *Effex* die? O hear
My Sov'reign, hear the Sorrows of my Soul,
And take some Pity on a Pain so great!
Let but my *Effex* live. —————

Queen. ————— What must I bear
This Burthen to my Grave? Will no one loose
Th' ungrateful Load, and force her Arms away?

C. Effex. Will you not hear me first? Will you not
My *Effex*? Pity my Complaints? --- Alas! [spare
[*She is forced away.*

I am too weak for the rude Hand of Pow'r,
Too weak for such a Passion, impotent
To fave so great a Man --- Then farewell Peace
And meek Submission; welcome Fury, Rage,
And all the Train of disappointed Love.
On you just Heav'n may pour its Curses down,
And rack your Heart tho' seated on a Throne;
May, lost in Winds, disperse your slighted Pray'r,
And gloom your Soul, like mine, with black Despair;
With all its Terrors load your parting Breath,
And blast your Hopes of Happiness in Death.

[*Exeunt.*

The End of the Fourth Act.

ACT



ACT V. SCENE I.

QUEEN. and NOTTINGHAM,

Nott. **M** Adam! may I presume t'enquire why thus
Unknown, disguis'd, you seek this awful
[Place?

This House of Sorrow and of Guilt? Can you
Descend from all the shining Pomp of Courts
To breathe a Prison's Air, and deign to hear
The Malefactor's Chain, nor dread the Blast
Of Censure, and the Curse of evil Tongues?

Queen. Are we alone? ---- Can no intruding Eye
Discern us? no betraying Ear attend
To our Discourse? Let's hearken if no Noise,
No Footstep follows ---- What a Groan was there!
How long! how loud! 'tis *Essex* sure, and hark!
Again ---- 'tis he! 'tis he! he thinks o'er all
His Woes, in Pain, in Agony of Soul
And mourns the galling Load ----

Nott. ---- 'Tis *Essex* then
That Charms you thus ingloriously astray
From Majesty, from Empire, and from Fame.
You come, no doubt, a mourning Queen! to weep
A Pris'ner's Doom, to soften his Distress
With Royal Pity, and assuage his Woes
With the long Series of your own.----

Queen. ——— Forbear

Good Nottingham! forbear th' unkind upbraiding ---
For tho' fond Passion with its treach'rous Train
Of sly Deceivers cling about my Heart, I scorn
T' expose my Weakness, or indulge his Pride
With such a flatt'ring Tale --- 'Tis true I long
To save him from th' impending Stroke of Death
And offer all the Mercy of a Throne ;
But you must save the Blushes of a Queen,
And Woo him to intreat the Grace I wish
So fondly to bestow.

Nott. ——— Yes, that his proud,
His swelling Heart may slight the proffer'd Boon,
And glory to have made th' Endeavour vain.
When Justice doom'd him and th' assembled Peers
Ev'n courted him to kneel before the Throne,
And supplicate for Life, he sternly said
Dishonour deeper stung than Death, and, if
'Twas just to die, 'twas Infamy to live.

Queen. But now perhaps the near Approach of Fate
Has aw'd his stubborn Mind, and Life appears
More amiable than ever ———

Nott. ——— True, his fond,
His doating Rutland may have sooth'd him down
To Life, and Shame at once ; and he'll accept
Your Grace, on any Terms, to make her happy ---

Queen. To make her happy! --- miserable Thought!
The Mercy I desire to give, denies
Its Aid to me--- at all Events a Wretch
Indeed! Why am I stil'd a Queen? for Pain
For Misery alone? it cannot be ---
Fly quick and urge him to be-friend himself,
That I may have a Plea to speak his Pardon,
And some Hope to live in Quietness again ----

[*Exeunt severally.*]

Back Scene Draws. Essex solus.

'Tis not the Fear of Death, the Consequence
Of Guilt, or the dire Horrors of a State
Unknown, that cloud my Senses, and disturb
The settled Temper of my Mind : No sure
My Innocence must waite my fleeting Soul
To the blest'd Regions of eternal Day.
--- But 'tis for *Rutland*, for *Southampton's* Fate
I grieve, my Wife ! my Friend ! the dearest Names !
The noblest Passions Nature owns ! ---- to lead
So brave a Man to an untimely Grave,
To hurl him into Ruin all at once,
Without a Pause to think on such a Doom,
'Tis horrible ! 'tis horrible ! --- O ! that
My Soul could lose all Memory of Things,
From the first Moment of my Birth, and plunge
Into Oblivion's darkest Tide. --- My Wife !
O Misery of Thought ! my Wife's expos'd
To all the Vengeance that a wrathful Queen
Can pour upon her tender Head ; in Grief,
In Wretchedness, in Horror, she'll consume
Her blooming Days, and wither in her Prime :
Must hear her *Essex* bleed his Soul away
With Infamy ; must herd with Poverty,
With Sorrow, and Despair ; must linger out
A tedious Life, oppress'd with Trouble, stung
With Pain, and ever wishing for her last,
Her dying Hour : O what a Scene is this !
Must this be *Rutland's* Fate ? Confusion ! Death !
Amazement ! ah my Brain turns round ! and all
My Senses die ---- *[sinks down.]*

Enter Nottingham.

Essex. ----- Good Heav'n ! the Guardian Pow'r !

E 4

The

The Genius of my Life ! blest'd Angel ! pure
Intelligence ! Art thou descended from
Above to ease a wretched Mortal's Care,
And warn him from the World ?

Nott. ————— Alas ! my Lord,
Your Sorrows seem to have disturb'd your Brain:
Know you not me ? that *Nottingham* whose Love
You scorn'd, whose Person you despis'd ----

Effex. Forgive me, Madam, if my troubled Thoughts
Were roving wide from Sense ; a thousand Ills
Beset me round, a thousand Enemies
Have waited for my Life ; the Hour's at Hand
When I shall be no more, my Pangs came thick
Upon me, no Relief was near, and all
My Soul was hurried thro' a Wild of Woe.

Nott. But, grant a Friend, a very faithful Friend,
Should study to preserve you, should again
Restore you to your Prince's Love, and rear
Your Fame, and Virtue to their former Height.

Effex. ————— Alas ! the luckless Soul
Has no such Friend ; the flatt'ring Train, that sooth'd
His happier Days, vanish in Haste away,
When Sorrow, and Adversity come on :
Show me one Courtier that would waste a Thought
To save a falling Patron, or relieve
Greatness in Ruin ! “ No, like Insects in
“ A Summers Sun they revel in his Beams,
“ Till Winter sheds his Snow, and stormy Days
“ Approach, but then they hide their tim'rous Heads,
“ Or seek a warmer Clime.

Nott. ————— You're too severe,
My Lord, yo've still a Friend that ever toils
To set you free, and makes your valu'd Life
The utmost of her Care.

Effex. ————— The Queen ! What can
The Queen still smile upon her *Effex* ? still
Shed down Compassion on his Woes ?

Nott.

Nott. ——— 'Tis not
The Queen, but one who int'rests all her Soul
In your behalf.----Suppose 'twas *Nottingham*----
Would you accept the Favour from her Hands?
Would you be grateful to me? ----spare my Shame;
And image out the rest.

Essex. ——— O why would you
Recal my Soul to Life? why tempt me thus
With gay Delusions and fallacious Charms?
You are too good to cheat a dying Man,
And I'm too Poor to cancel such a Debt.
My charming *Rutland* has engross'd me all,
Lives in my Soul, and pants in ev'ry Vein;
Or else, With real Thankfulness, I'd court
The proffer'd Joy, nor throw a Thought away
On all the Sex besides.

Nott. ——— Speak on, my Lord,
Your Voice still charms me, tho' it speaks my Bane:
'Tis vain to plead, while *Rutland* has your Heart:
'Tis vain to flatter my deluded Thought
With distant Views of airy Happiness,
I never, never must enjoy.---
—— Yet if there's ought you would
Intreat the Queen to grant, a secret Trust,
Which scarce a Whisper should reveal, let me
Convey it to her Ear, and be the Means
Of serving, in his last Distress, so dear,
So brave a Man.

Essex. ——— O you have rowz'd my Soul,
And waken'd all its Pow'rs; there is but one ---
My Life depends on the Success ---- This Ring
The Queen once gave me for my Guard against
All Danger, and Distress, and, when restor'd,
She vow'd to grant me all my Heart's Desire:
Lo! on my Knees, I give it to your Charge,
Imploring Mercy for my Friend, and (if

Her

Her Goodness can bestow so large a Boon)
 For me,---- But, above all, let *Rutland* be
 Restor'd to Grace, let Royal Pity calm
 Her anxious Bosom, and relieve her Woes.

Nott. With Joy, my Lord, I'll execute my Charge,
 And in the Confidence of all your Wish,
 Give up your Anguish, and forget your Woe.

[*Exit Nott.*]

Scene closes.

Enter the Queen and Nottingham.

Queen. What says the Earl, my *Nottingham*? tell me,
 This Moment, all he hopes, and all he fears;
 Talks he of me, of Mercy? does he mourn
 His past Offences, and intreat my Grace?
 I must know all, my Friend, my Soul's alarm'd,
 And ev'ry Passion longs for Utterance.

Nott. Alas! your Majesty but little thinks
 How stubborn is your Fav'rite's Heart, how much
 He broods on his imagin'd Wrongs, How much,
 How fond he muses on his *Rutland's* Charms;
 Sullen, and sad he sits in mournful Mood,
 His down-cast Eye fix'd gloomy on the Ground,
 And all his Passions struggling for Command.
 He heard my Message with disdainful Mien,
 Then question'd if the *Queen* had sent t'insult
 His Woes, and triumph in his Misery:

Queen. Ungrateful Wretch!

Nott. ————— If she demands my Blood,
 From ev'ry Vein it shall be pour'd to slake
 Her savage Thirst; tell her I dare to die
 Without a Groan, and scorn, to kneel, and sue,
 And tremble for a Life so full of Woe,
 So little worthy of a single Pray'r.

Queen. And was this all? sent he no Ring, no Claim
 Of promis'd Pardon, or his Sovereign's Grace?

Nott.

Nott. No, none at all.

Queen. ——— Sure thou art false as Hell,
And hast betray'd thy Trust: He could not die
So obstinate, with such Contempt of Life.

Nott. 'Tis Truth it self; he sent no Ring, no Claim
Of Mercy, as I hope in Heav'n; indeed
He begg'd *Southampton* might be spar'd, and that
You'd pardon *Rutland*, mitigate her Woes,
And make her Life as happy as your own.

Queen. Yes, Traitor! Yes, I'll mitigate her Woes,
And thine, but as ye both deserve: Within
This Hour he dies, and she in vain shall mourn
His Sorrows, and her own.----

————— Hope of Revenge
Cures my sick Soul, and spirits me a-new:
Haste, let him die, let *Burleigh* speak his Fate,
And lead him to his Doom. ---'tis fit, ---'tis just,
The Wretch should die who dar'd despise my Grace;
Who would prefer a Subject's Charms, and scorn,
At once, a Sovereign, and her proffer'd Throne.

[*Exeunt.*]

Enter *Burleigh*, Officers, Guards, &c.

Bur. Order the Pris'ner here---Let *Essex* now
Attend on me, and bow his haughty Soul
To mine: Time was when Hundreds made their Court
To him, and, waiting all the live-long Day,
With Rev'rence, and Submission, breath'd his Name;
Stil'd him their Lord, courted his Smiles, and liv'd
Upon his Favour; nay ev'n I was forc'd
To worship at this Idol's Shrine, and own
The Influence of his Pow'r: ---But now 'tis o'er,
His Scale descends, and mine flies up to Heav'n;
He first shall know the Change, shall know I speak
His Doom, and, with obsequious Cringe, bend down
In Homage to my State as I have done
To his ---- But hold they come ---

Enter

Enter Essex and Southampton Guarded.

Burleigh Walks up and down disdainfully, not seeming to observe them.

Essex. ————— What Farce is this?
What Tool of Pow'r is he who proudly stalks
In mimic Majesty along? Who scorns
A Pris'ner's Voice, nor deigns a single Glance
To one whom yester Sun beheld the Pride
Of Fortune, and the Joy of Crowns?

Bur. ————— Forbear
Your idle Vaunts, 'tis Time for other Thoughts;
This Place, these Guards, your Crimes should warn
[your Soul
To think on Death, on Death my Lord; How sounds
The Name of Death to such an Ear as yours?

Essex. The Name of Death! thou Dotard! canst thou
That Death will frighten me? No, in thine own [think
Dark Bosom, read the Fears that nightly shake
Thy Coward Frame at such an empty Sound:
I tell thee, Statesman! that in Death I seek
Repose from Labour, a Relief from Pain,
A Guard from Malice, Villany, and all
The execrable Wiles of wicked Men.

Bur. The Madman! How he raves! yet hear my
I pity your Distress, but am oblig'd [Lord,
To lead you to the Block; this very Hour
You die; the Headsman waits to give the Blow:
---- Within there, --- see! the fatal Scene prepar'd
And every dreadful Circumstance of Death
With so much Justice yours.

Back

*Back Scene drawing discovers the Executioner,
the Scaffold hung with Black, &c.*

South. ————— Insulting Wretch,
To load the Dying with a double Weight
Of Pain and Woe! --- Inhuman Treatment! curs'd
Revenge! unhappy Man! ---

Essex. ————— Forbear, my Friend!
Forbear, be calm, the Pomp of Death dismays
Not me, my Soul disdains the View; let Slaves,
Like *Burleigh*, tremble to resign their Clay,
And launch into Eternity:

————— We'll shame Mankind
From such fantastick Fears: Thy Courage shall
Support my Soul; my Constancy confirm
And strengthen thine; in Unity, in Love,
In Friendship we have liv'd, nor shall ev'n Death
Divide us. ----

Bur. ——— Hold, my Lord, the Queen reprieves
Southampton, and you die alone.

South. ————— I scorn
Her Mercy, 'tis too late, unworthy her,
Unworthy me; no, let me die, as I
Have liv'd, with Honour, let my Soul depart
With Company it loves, not linger here
Repining at her Doom, abhorring Life,
Lamenting thee, my Friend, expos'd to Cares,
To Ills, to Sorrows, which my Death would cure.

Essex. No, my *Southampton*, no, you must not die,
You must not leave my *Rutland* all forlorn,
O'erwhelm'd with Grief, and dying on my Hearse;
For her lov'd sake, for mine, accept of Life,
Defend her from her Foes, be you her Guard,
Her Brother, Husband, Friend; the Time will come
When the dear Fruit of all our Joys will want

A Father, want a Friend ; be you its Friend,
 Be you its Father, blefs its tender Age,
 And if rough Manhood be its noble Lot,
 Form him for Glory, and his Country's Good ;
 Let him avoid a vicious Court, despise its Charms,
 Be fond of Virtue, Liberty, and Fame :—
 And --- if he mentions me, defend my Cause,
 Nor let him think his Sire the Scandal of
 His Race.

South. ---- O my dear Friend forbear this Talk,
 It softens all the Man within me, how
 Can I endure to breathe when you are fall'n,
 When you are dead ? --- Assist me Heav'n ! lest I
 Grow mad with Sorrow, and blaspheme your Laws.
 ---- But I'll approve my self a Friend indeed,
 I'll live in Pain, in Torment to secure
 A lasting Quiet to your Shade, nor heed
 The Voice of Scorn, th' inhuman Taunt that will
 Arraign my Soul of Cowardice, and Fear,
 In deigning to accept of Life, when you,
 My Lord, when you are hurried from the World.

Effex. Oh ! my *Southampton*, such a Faith as yours
 Is rarely to be found ; sure you were form'd
 To be my Guardian Genius, to endear
 Me to the World, and make me wish to live.
 Alas ! I leave you, with Reluctance, leave
 You to the World, amid the Vices of
 A barb'rous Age, and hasten to the Grave ;
 Where dark Oblivion shall, with silent Hand,
 O'er-shade my Woes, and cancel all my Wrongs.

Bur. My Lord, you are remanded back ; so take
 [to *South.*

Your last Adieu at once, nor trifle Time
 Away.

South. ——— What must we part so soon ?

Effex. ——— So soon !

Ere yet the Breath of Life is fled, while Thought,

And

And Memory remain, while ev'ry Tye
Of strong Affection, Friendship's pleasing Charms,
And firmest Gratitude inflames my Soul,
Make ev'ry Moment dearer than the last,
And urge my Passions to abhor that Fate
Which separates us for ever.

South. ————— No my Lord,
We shall not part for ever, Heav'n shall see
Our Souls united, and our Friendship burn
Anew; thro' all Eternity our Joys
Shall last, and double as it rolls---- You first
Ascend the unknown Path, quick I pursue
Your Footsteps to the Realm of Day; look down
With Pity on my Toils below, and, when
The icy Hand of Death shall set me free,
Be you the first to gratulate my Change,
And speak me Welcome to your Arms again.

Effex. Till then, farewell. [Embrace.

South. ————— Till then, farewell.

[Exit.

Enter Countess of Essex, and Attendants.

Effex. ————— My Wife!
Support me Heav'n, or I shall sink beneath
The Burthen of my Woes. Why art thou come,
[Embrace.

My Angel, to this hideous Place, this Den
Of Mourning, where sweet Comfort never dwells,
Nor Pleasure deigns a Smile? Is it to view
Thy dearest *Effex* struggling with his Pangs,
And groaning on the Verge of Life, in all
The Anguish that the Heart can feel? Or are
Thy Charms to sooth my melancholy Thoughts?
And sweeten ev'n the Agonies of Death?

C. Effex. The Queen, my Lord, has been so wond'rous
So Kind, so mercifully Kind, t' indulge [Good
My

A Father, want a Friend ; be you its Friend,
 Be you its Father, bleſs its tender Age,
 And if rough Manhood be its noble Lot,
 Form him for Glory, and his Country's Good ;
 Let him avoid a vicious Court, deſpiſe its Charms,
 Be fond of Virtue, Liberty, and Fame :—
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 I'll live in Pain, in Torment to ſecure
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Effex. Oh ! my *Southampton*, ſuch a Faith as yours
 Is rarely to be found ; ſure you were form'd
 To be my Guardian Genius, to endear
 Me to the World, and make me wiſh to live.
 Alas ! I leave you, with Reluctance, leave
 You to the World, amid the Vices of
 A barb'rous Age, and haſten to the Grave ;
 Where dark Oblivion ſhall, with ſilent Hand,
 O'er-ſhade my Woes, and cancel all my Wrongs.

Bur. My Lord, you are remanded back ; ſo take
 [to *South.*

Your laſt Adieu at once, nor trifle Time
 Away.

South. ----- What muſt we part ſo ſoon ?

Effex. ----- So ſoon !

Ere yet the Breath of Life is fled, while Thought,
 And

And Memory remain, while ev'ry Tye
Of strong Affection, Friendship's pleasing Charms,
And firmest Gratitude inflames my Soul,
Make ev'ry Moment dearer than the last,
And urge my Passions to abhor that Fate
Which separates us for ever.

South. ————— No my Lord,
We shall not part for ever, Heav'n shall see
Our Souls united, and our Friendship burn
Anew; thro' all Eternity our Joys
Shall last, and double as it rolls---- You first
Ascend the unknown Path, quick I pursue
Your Footsteps to the Realm of Day; look down
With Pity on my Toils below, and, when
The icy Hand of Death shall set me free,
Be you the first to gratulate my Change,
And speak me Welcome to your Arms again.

Essex. Till then, farewell. [Embrace.

South. ————— Till then, farewell.

[Exit.

Enter Countess of Essex, and Attendants.

Essex. ————— My Wife!
Support me Heav'n, or I shall sink beneath
The Burthen of my Woes. Why art thou come,
[Embrace.

My Angel, to this hideous Place, this Den
Of Mourning, where sweet Comfort never dwells,
Nor Pleasure deigns a Smile? Is it to view
Thy dearest *Essex* struggling with his Pangs,
And groaning on the Verge of Life, in all
The Anguish that the Heart can feel? Or are
Thy Charms to sooth my melancholy Thoughts?
And sweeten ev'n the Agonies of Death?

C. Essex. The Queen, my Lord, has been so wond'rous
So Kind, so mercifully Kind, t' indulge [Good
My

My love-sick Soul in list'ning to your Voice,
 In sharing all your Woes, and studying to
 Relieve the irksome Load: Perhaps this Grace
 Forebodes your Pardon, and our Lives shall yet
 Be bless'd with Love, with Happiness, and Joy.

Essex. Alas ! seest thou not *Burleigh* there ? These
 [Guards !

Yon pale, and meagre Wretch ! that dreadful Steel !
 Yon Scene of Horror and of Death ! --- Now talk
 Of Life, of Happiness, and Joy. --- Oh Heav'ns !
 She faints, she dies, the living Crimson leaves
 Her fading Cheek, and Death, all cold, has seiz'd
 Upon her Heart : This is too much, too much,
 For Man to bear. Lead on, my Friends, lead on,
 Death will be Comfort now. --- But see ! she breathes,
 She lives, look up, my Fair, 'tis *Essex* speaks,
 Look up, my Fair, awake to Life, and bless
 My last, sad Moments with thy Charms.

C. Essex. ----- Ah me !

I live again, again must feel the Pangs
 Of Sorrow, Wretchedness, Despair, and all
 The Miseries they bring. --- But now kind Death,
 In pleasing Slumbers, gently lull'd my Woes,
 And, like an Angel, bless'd my Dreams : Methought
 His Voice was sweet like yours, his Form as fair ;
 I grew enamour'd of the Phantom, strain'd him close,
 And, in his icy Arms, forgot the World,
 And all I left behind.

Essex. ----- Kind Vision ! soft
 Relief from Misery, and Pain ! Oh that like Peace
 May ever be your Lot ; like Easiness
 Of Soul indulge your future Hours, and, with
 Gay Footstep lead you to the Grave. ---

C. Essex. Talk not of Joy, and Pleasure, they're no
 With you they die for ever : All my Joys [more ;
 Were fix'd on you, and you --- I dare not think,
 --- I cannot speak --- Explore your own fond Heart,

The

The Pangs of parting --- and for ever --- Oh!
How shocking is the Pain! how keen the Smart! ---
I die with Horror at the View. --- But I'll
Conceal my Sorrows, smother all my Grief;
My Complaints will melt your tender Soul; unman
Your dying Thoughts, my Brain shall burst before
I'll heave a Groan if it should torture you;
Stern Resolution seal my Eye-lids down,
And not a Tear betray my hidden Woe.

Essex. No, give them vent my Love, we'll mingle
As we have mingled Joys; --- 'tis the last time, [Tears,
And Grief shall be indulg'd: Should your weak Breast
Once stifle its Complaints, or sadly brood
In Silence o'er your Woes, Life would take wing,
And fly away disdainful of the Load.

C. Essex. O that it would! I wish to die; my Life
Has been a Scene of Pain, a Length of Woe;
I long to lay it down, the Hour's at Hand,
My Sorrows hang a Weight upon my Heart,
The Grave lies open, and the Way is wide;
Our Ashes there, my Lord, will rest, nor the
Rude Hand of Pow'r disturb them.

Essex. Now, 'tis now
I feel the worst I can endure, the whole
Amount of Misery and Pain: Will you
Then die the Sacrifice of Grief? Must this
Fair Frame resign its Beauties, and so soon
Adorn a Grave? O miserable Thought!
Yet you must live, my Fair, that the dear Fruit
Of such a mutual, such a faithful Love,
May breathe the vital Air, may prove the Joy
Of your declining Life, and justify
His Father's Fame to future Years. --- And hark ---

[They seem to talk apart.

Bur. Curse on this long Delay, this foolish Prate,
This whining Grief: That ever Woman should
Acquire so strong a Rule: Again we're lost,

If the Queen's wanton Will should change, nor could
Ev'n Nottingham retrieve our ruin'd Cause. [*aside.*]

--- My Lord, my Lord, you talk a tedious While,
You think not that the Time draws near, that Pow'r
Must be obey'd.

Essex. ----- Yes, Monster! I expect
That Pow'r will be obey'd -- Away -- 'tis Time it should.
----- Farewell thou Miracle of Truth,
Of Virtue, Love, and ev'ry Charm, ---- farewell.
O my sick Heart! again she faints! again
She dies! grasps, like a sinking Wretch, the Wave
That disappoints his Hold. Her Lips are chill'd,
Her Cheek grows pale, and ev'ry Sense is numb'd
With Agony.

Bur. ----- Her Senses will return,
My Lord ---- then take this Moment to depart,
Lest waking she renew her Complaints, and run
Thro' all the Circuit of her Woes again.

Eff. Yet one Pang more, and then -- and then -- 'tis past --
[*kisses her.*]

Now, fond of Death, I quit this troubled Shore,
Scorn the gay World, and court its Charms no more.
By curs'd Ambition fir'd, I made my Claim
To Wealth, to Honour, Flattery, and Fame;
But, wise too late, lament with fruitless Moan
My Consort widow'd, and my Friend undone:
Distracting Thought! Ambition was my Bane,
My Pangs are real, but my Joys were vain.

[*Exit as to Execution, Burleigh following.*
Scene closes.]

“ C. *Essex.* Alas! what have you done? Why am
“ To Misery again? I should have slept [I wak'd
“ For ever, nor have dream'd of Sorrow more.
“ *Essex,* my Love, my Soul, my Life, is dead;
“ I saw him die, and a bright heav'nly Guard
“ Of Angels with a swift Ascent, convey'd
“ His smiling Ghost to Heav'n; to me he wav'd

“ Hi

" His Hand, I follow'd on the Wings of Love,
 " And thro' a Length of Happiness and Joy,
 " We rov'd secure from Envy, free from Pain.
 " --- See there ! on yonder golden Cloud his Form
 " Majestick as in Life appears ---- Again
 " He waves his Hand ---- I come, my Love, I come,
 " I fly to your Embrace ---- I have him here,
 " And we shall die no more." -----

Enter Queen, Nottingham, &c.

Queen. ——— Look ! there she lies,
 My Fair, my hated Rival lies ev'n lost
 In Grief, and buried in Despair ---- Alas !
 How guilty am I grown, to rack so kind,
 So true, so innocent an Heart ! ---- What Crime
 Was hers ? She knew no Treason ---- All her Fault
 Was Love ---- Was Love, and that's my own ---- Good
 [Heav'n,
 What Horror gathers on my Soul ! How much
 I tremble at my own Disgrace ! ---- Assist
 Her there ---- recall her fleeting Sense, and rouse
 Her from her Trance --- She wakes, she moves, she lives,
 --- Thou luckless fair One ! Beauty in Distress !
 Thou lovely Innocence ! forgive thy Queen ;
 Behold she takes Thee to her Arms, and woos
 Thee to her Love.

C. Essex. ——— Forbear, forbear to sooth
 Me with such Sounds, for they have lost their Charms ;
 With *Essex* vanish'd all my Sense of Joy ;
 I only hope to die upon his Urn :
 Yet ere I mingle my Remains with his,
 I must obey his last Command, and give
 That Pleasure to his Shade. ---- With dying Words
 He breath'd a Blessing on your Name, laid down
 His Life submissive to your Will ; yet wail'd
 A broken Promise, and a Ring restor'd

In vain:-- To Nottingham upon his Knees
 'Twas giv'n, imploring Mercy for his Friend,
 And for himself:-- but you, with cruel Heart,
 Forgot your Vow,—— my *Essex* dy'd—and I
 Am left to mourn.

Queen.——— And is this true? O Heav'n!
 What mischief Treachery has done! Fly swift
 To save him, fly with Angel's Wings, arrest
 The Blow, and countermand his Doom.

[*Exeunt Officers.*

——— And now,
 Thou dearest Part'ner of the bravest Man,
 Assist me to revenge thy Wrongs, and mine,
 To curse this base, this barb'rous Wretch, whose vile,
 Insinuating Arts have lur'd us on
 To Ruin! Go thou monstrous Wickedness!
 Begone, nor herd with Humane Kind; thy Breath's
 Infection, and a thousand Plagues are glan'd
 From either Eye.

Nott.——— *Madam!*———

Queen.——— Confusion on
 Thy Voice! 'tis Death, 'tis Madness to my Ears;
 Go howl with Wolves; and make the Serpent's Den
 Thy Haunt: Thy Rage, thy Subtlety are worse
 Than either; go, and may the greatest Curse,
 The Soul can know, attend thee to the Verge
 Of Life. ——

Nott.——— Since I must go, I go content
 To Wilds, and Woods, an endless Banishment.
 To my torn Heart a fierce Revenge was due,
 The Joy was mine, I leave the Plague to you;
 To you whose Souls an equal Flame could prove,
 Tho' one was blest'd with Pow'r, and one with Love.

[*Exit*

Enter

*Enter Burleigh and Attendants bearing in a Coffin
the Corpse of Essex.*

Queen. What Scene of Woe is this? What funeral
Where is the Earl? I sent to save him, sure [Rites?
He lives at my Command, and my pure Fame
Will not be sullied with so foul a Deed.

Bur. Alas! Your Orders came too late, the Blow
Was giv'n, and He no more ---- His last Remains
Are here. -----

Queen. Curse on thy Raven Voice ---- Is then
My *Essex* dead? my Order broke? my Will
Despis'd? --- O *Ratland*! Love and Pow'r are vain.

C. Essex, Kneeling by the Coffin, and removing the Lid.

This is thy Mansion, Death, and here my Lord's
Deliver'd from his Woes --- How could you part
Our tender Souls, ye Ministers of Fate?
How could you sting me with such bitter Pangs,
Yet force me still to live, to love, and mourn?
--- Perhaps he hears me, hovers o'er his Hearse,
And on the Breeze, still whispers out his Flame:
Delightful Thought! He hears me, *Essex* hears
And pities my Distress: Ah! I feel him,
And his Touch is cold, he chills my Heart,
And freezes all my Frame. --- [sinks down.

Queen. ----- Bear her away
From this distracting Scene: How could'st thou rack
Her melancholy Soul with such a Sight?
A Sight that startles Nature, and distracts
The Mind with Horror.

Bur. ----- 'Twas by your Command
'Twas done, or *Nottingham* abus'd my Zeal.

Queen. Revengeful Wretch! outrageous Fiend! and
Could'st Thou submit to such a cruel Deed? [Thou,
--- But

---- But ye are both alike, both join'd your Pow'rs
 To hasten on his Fate, and both will share
 The Vengeance due to such a Crime.--- Let him
 Be buried as a Soldier should, with Fame,
 With Honour; let his Actions be engrav'd
 Upon his Tomb, and let his Reliques sleep
 In Peace ----- Had Pride neer fir'd his haughty Soul,
 Disdaining Empire, and above Controul,
 He still had liv'd, secure from hostile Rage,
 The Care of Heav'n, the Glory of his Age.
 Had my fond Heart no soft Delusions known,
 I'd still been happy tho' my Fav'rite's gone:
 For Virtuous Kings should doom no single Cause
 By Passion's Dictates, but by Reason's Laws.

[*Exeunt Omnes.*]

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